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THE EAST EUROPEAN  
REVOLUTION

*By the Same Author*

EASTERN EUROPE BETWEEN THE WARS, 1918-1941

THE DECLINE OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA

FROM LENIN TO KHRUSHCHEV

NEITHER WAR NOR PEACE

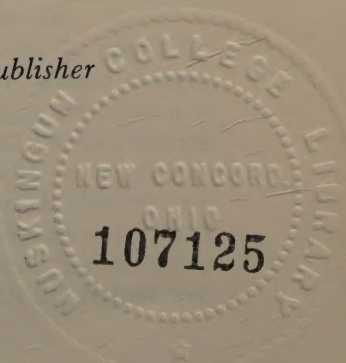
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# THE EAST EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

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BOOKS THAT MATTER

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

IN the first half of the book, several minor errors have been rectified. In the second half, a large part of Chapter IX has been rewritten. I have attempted to reduce the undigested statistical material and to give more space to general trends. Some information concerning the upward revision of the economic plans in 1951 has been included. In the case of Yugoslavia some information on the practical working of the plan in the last two years has been added. The section on foreign trade has been shortened, and here too further information on Yugoslavia has been added. In Chapter X I have brought the survey of collectivisation of agriculture up to date. During 1951 the pace was substantially increased in the Cominform countries and slackened in Yugoslavia. In the section of this chapter dealing with Labour, I have replaced the examples given in the first edition by more recent examples and have briefly mentioned new trends in the exploitation of Labour. In the section on the Churches recent developments in communist treatment of Polish and Hungarian Catholicism have been mentioned. A new paragraph has been added at the end of Chapter XII on Greece.

The only point on which I have modified my opinion is the situation of the industrial working class. In the first edition I think I was somewhat too optimistic. Especially since the revision of the plans, the workers have been subjected to increasing exploitation. The situation of most workers approaches that of the British worker in the worst days of early capitalism, while of course their freedom of opinion and speech is far less.

On all other points I stick to my original views. In particular I reiterate my view that the purpose of collectivisation of agriculture is political and administrative rather than economic and technical, and that the breach between Tito and the Cominform was caused not by disagreement on doctrine but by petty quarrels arising from the basic fact that Moscow distrusted Tito because he had created his own state machine, not received it as a gift from the Red Army. Just as, in the Soviet Union, Stalin's feuds with his former colleagues were caused by personal hatred and

subsequently justified by doctrinal or political issues, so in the case of Tito and Stalin the personal breach came first and the tame ideologues were then given the task of inventing the ideological issues. They did not do their job very well, because in so far as Tito was at all guilty of the charges brought against him, he was less guilty than any of the neighbouring puppet communist rulers. Once the breach was made, however, serious differences of policy did in fact develop.

It is perhaps worth while to explain more clearly the purpose of this book. It is twofold—to describe the recent history of Eastern Europe, especially since 1941, and to describe and analyse the policy of the communist regimes. The communist leaders, as Marxists, are bound to pay lip service to the theory that the causes of political phenomena are economic. In their practical policy however they invariably give first priority to political factors. I express no opinion concerning the general proposition that economics determines politics: with regard to the particular phenomenon of Eastern Europe from 1945 to 1951 I have not the least doubt that politics is more important than economics. If the emphasis in this book is on politics rather than economics, that is because the emphasis of events is on politics rather than economics. Nevertheless, as a great deal of political action and controversy is concerned with economics, a good deal of space in this book is given to economic problems, and that not solely in the chapters which have an economic or social heading. An expert in economic analysis would of course treat these problems quite differently. I am not concerned with economic analysis, but with the economic content of, and background to, communist politics. But politics is not 'only politics', a triviality to be dismissed with contempt. Politics in a communist state is every aspect of private and public life and every moment of the day and night.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

**D**URING the three years that have passed since the second, revised, edition appeared, Stalin has died, and there have been changes in the Soviet Union which have been reflected in the East European states. It has also become possible to see more clearly the trend towards the formation of new ruling classes in these countries, closely following the trend in the Soviet Union but differing in certain important respects. In Yugoslavia a different type of regime has been evolving since the breach with the Cominform, and here too the picture is substantially clearer than it was three years ago. Finally the place of Eastern Europe in international politics has been modified, by the formation and subsequent dislocation of the Balkan Alliance, and still more by the increasing urgency of the German problem.

These subjects are sufficiently important to justify a new chapter, which has been inserted between the last two. Otherwise there has been no change.

Since the new chapter was written, the Geneva conference of October 1955 has been held. It has only too sadly confirmed the analysis written in the early summer.

*December 1955*

*To*  
*My Wife*

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*Drawn by Denys R. Baker*

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## INTRODUCTION

WHEN the Bolsheviks made their revolution in November 1917, they felt themselves the heirs of the men who made the great 'bourgeois revolutions' of 1688 in England and 1789 in France. At the same time their revolution was the first of a new type. It was a 'proletarian revolution', made in the name and on behalf of the industrial working class. It was expected to be followed soon by similar revolutions in other countries, especially in the advanced industrial countries.

The Bolshevik revolution established the Soviet system in Russia, a country whose population to-day is some 200 millions. Despite a few brief successes, however, Communism did not establish itself elsewhere for thirty years. To-day the Soviet form of government is being rapidly extended to a further 100 million Europeans. World war gave the Russian Bolsheviks their opportunity in 1917, by shattering the cumbrous but brittle machinery of the Russian state. World war again gave communists their opportunity in 1945, by shattering the Reich of Adolf Hitler, who had destroyed some of the East European states and placed some under his protection. History made a present of chaos to the Bolsheviks in 1917, but they had to fight their own civil war in order to put their regime in the place of chaos. Alone in Eastern Europe in 1944-5 the Yugoslav communists achieved this task: elsewhere communists were placed in power by the victorious army of Bolshevik Russia. Even the Yugoslav communists had had substantial foreign help, first from the West and then from the East.

The Eastern European revolution then was imposed from outside and from above. It cannot justly be compared with the revolutions of 1688, 1789 and 1917. But because it was imposed, it is not less a revolution. The public and private lives of 100 million East Europeans are being transformed out of recognition and at breakneck speed. The social structure and political regimes of Eastern Europe (except Czechoslovakia) between the world wars were nearer to those of Imperial Russia than of Western Europe, but its culture was far more western than that of Imperial

Russia had ever been. And cultural traditions, though felt most strongly by the fairly small educated class, or intelligentsia, penetrated also to other classes, including even the impoverished peasantry. The influence of school, and of the Catholic and Protestant churches, ensured this. Therefore the change from the pre-war civilisation to the civilisation of the Soviet world is far greater and far more abrupt for the people of Eastern Europe than it was for the people of European and Asiatic Russia after the Bolshevik revolution. The pace is also quicker. Eleven years passed between the Bolshevik revolution and the inauguration of the first Five-Year Plan, twelve years between the revolution and collectivisation of agriculture. The first East European Five-Year Plan, the Yugoslav, began in 1947, two years after Tito's government had obtained power throughout the country. The other countries are beginning their five- or six-year construction plans in 1949 and 1950. Collectivisation was announced as the aim in Eastern Europe in the summer of 1948, and by the end of 1949 it had gone a long way in both Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

The changes in Eastern Europe then are truly revolutionary. They are also immensely important for the outer world. By them the Soviet world's supply of potential factory-fodder and cannon-fodder has risen from 200 million to nearly 300 million. Moreover the average level of manual skill and education of Eastern Europe is far higher than that of European, let alone Asiatic, Russia. If the sovietisation of Eastern Europe can be consolidated, it will probably prove a more valuable gain to Moscow than the sovietisation of China with its 400 millions.

The purpose of this book is both to describe and to analyse the sovietisation of Eastern Europe. The obstacles and pitfalls are of course obvious. Some information is unobtainable, and much more is unreliable. The process is by no means complete. International crises occur almost every month. Many details, and no doubt some important points, will later be seen to be mistaken. Yet still I think the attempt worth making. I believe there is room for a work intermediate between journalism and history. I believe that the academic tool-box can be applied to current events. I believe that the general pattern, and most of the detail, will bear the test of time.

Three things seem to me desirable for one undertaking such work—personal experience of Eastern Europe and knowledge of its background; close attention to current events in Eastern Europe over the period concerned; and study of the theory and

practice of Russian bolshevism and European communism. In an earlier work somewhat hurriedly composed in 1942-3,<sup>1</sup> and dealing with the period between the world wars, I was, I hope, reasonably well supplied with the first qualification, and to a lesser extent with the second, but completely lacked the third. I knew nothing of Russian history, the Soviet regime, or the organisation of communist parties. I had seen communists in Eastern Europe only as martyrs of fascist dictatorships, regarded with sympathy by many democratic intellectuals and discontented peasants. No indication could be found in Eastern Europe of how they would behave should they themselves obtain power. I was of course familiar with anti-communist propaganda: it was impossible to visit Eastern Europe without being deluged by it. But I did not feel disposed to believe what I was told by Iron Guardists, by the scribes of Milan Stojadinović, or by the disciples of the late Dr. Joseph Goebbels. Nor was I impressed by the arguments of the Balkan ruling classes, whose attitude to communism was obviously determined by fear for their dubiously acquired possessions. My reluctance to believe any of these people was shared by older and wiser men than I on both sides of the Atlantic.

In preparing the present work I have tried to some extent to fill this gap. It is remarkable how much of current events in Eastern Europe is explained by even a little reading of Russian twentieth-century history, of the works of Lenin and Stalin, and of the early history of the Comintern. The whole programme is there in the speeches and articles of the prominent Soviet and Comintern figures of the 1920's. Organisation, methods of political warfare, political alliances and tactics, short-term and long-term aims—all are explained no less frankly and much more clearly than in *Mein Kampf*. The enemies and the dupes are named. But no one seems to have read or listened but the faithful. For those outside the fold, uncritical praise or uncritical abuse, panic or ostrich-headed optimism took the place of knowledge.

This personal reminiscence has, I think, a place in this introduction, because I believe that my own ignorance was not untypical of my generation, including those who tried or professed to try to learn something about international affairs. And though we are no doubt to blame for our ignorance, little less blame attaches to the generation before us, who had more than twenty years, between the Bolshevik revolution and the

<sup>1</sup> *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-41* (C.U.P., 1945).

Second World War, in which to learn, yet did not read the signs. As for the corresponding generation in Eastern Europe, who were not only ignorant of the nature of communism but took few steps to remove the social injustice on which communism thrived, they have less reason than any one to pride themselves on political wisdom. One must hope that in the West, on both sides of the Atlantic, the lesson will now be learned, and that steps will be taken in our schools and universities to tell the next generation something about both Russian history and the theory and practice of communism. As far as Britain is concerned, it must be admitted that so far there is mighty little sign of any change.

Throughout the period described in this book I have tried my best to follow events in Eastern Europe. During the war I was concerned in various official capacities with the affairs of various East European countries—in 1939–41 in Eastern Europe, in 1941–4 in the Middle East and 1944–6 in London. In the summer of 1946 I visited Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary; in the spring of 1947 Czechoslovakia and Hungary; in the autumn of 1948 Greece. I regret that I have not had an opportunity to visit Poland since the war. In all these journeys I met with help and courtesy from officials as well as from private citizens. It is now more than two years since I was beyond the 'iron curtain'. Such contacts as have been possible with people of those countries, and with British people who have more recently visited, or worked in, those countries, have of course been valuable to me. Apart from this I have relied on a good deal of written material, in both East European and Western languages, which is described, and the most useful part of which is listed, in the bibliographical note at the end of the book.

I have attempted to describe the process by which the East European communists obtained power, and to analyse the regime they have established. I have tried to show the impact of this regime on the social classes and on the citizen. These things I believe can be discovered with comparative certainty. How the citizen feels about it, however, is much more difficult to find out. Here the 'iron curtain' is a real obstacle. I have some idea how the citizen felt under the pre-war regimes, and some idea how he felt in the summer of 1946 and the spring of 1947 when I visited Eastern Europe. My ideas of both may well have been misguided. Since 1947 I can only guess, basing my guess on observance of official policy and my previous knowledge, supplementing it when possible by the accounts of those who have been more

recently. I have tried to avoid generalisations about public opinion to-day, and where they cannot be avoided I have tried to warn the reader of the difference between guesses and facts.

The Soviet zone of Europe to-day includes Eastern Germany and to a lesser extent Eastern Austria and Finland. I have only a very brief passage on the first two, and none at all about Finland. This is because Germany and Austria can only be adequately discussed in connection with Europe as a whole, and because Finland is unknown to me and belongs to a quite different cultural and strategic area from the Eastern Europe which is the subject of this book. On the other hand, I have included Greece, which is not sovietised, because it does belong inextricably to the Balkans and because its regime presents an interesting comparison both with the sovietised regimes and with the pre-war Balkan regimes.

The present cannot be described without some reference to the recent past. One of the less pleasant phenomena of contemporary political controversy is the falsification of the past for the sake of the present. It is as unpardonable to present the pre-war regimes as happy democracies because one dislikes Communist dictatorships, as to depict all past history as black misery and oppression because one loves the communist brave new world. I hope that, whatever other errors I have committed, I have avoided these two.

The first two chapters cover much the same ground as my earlier book, but are differently and of course much more shortly presented. The second chapter contains material on the origin of the main political parties of Eastern Europe which is not I think easily obtainable in English, or obtainable at all in one place. The events described and discussed in the third chapter have already figured in several brilliant works by professional diplomatic historians, which are listed in the bibliographical note. I think, however, that the reader will find useful a brief summary of the events of 1939-41 as far as they concern Eastern Europe only. The history of the resistance movements and of the relations between the exiled governments and the Great Allies has not, I believe, yet been presented as a whole. Here I am well aware that much important detail is not yet available, and very strong differences of opinion are held in good faith by better and more learned men than I. I venture, however, to hope that if ever all the facts are known my account will not be found to be very far from the truth.

The seizure of power by the communists falls partly into the wartime period and partly into the first years of armistice. In Yugoslavia and Albania it took place, in Greece it was frustrated, and in Poland it made much progress, already in 1944. The eighth chapter, the first in the third part, gives a chronological summary of political events in five countries up to the establishment of complete dictatorship by the Communist Party (during 1948), and in Yugoslavia and Albania up to the Tito-Cominform breach. Events subsequent to this are mentioned in the later chapters, which are not chronological, but deal with economic policy, social classes, distribution of political power and foreign policy. The chapter on Greece is mainly chronological, divided into a political and an economic section, and ending with a brief summary of problems and trends.

In the analytical chapters I have tried to point out the differences which still exist between individual countries, but my emphasis is rather on uniformity than on diversity. This is because I am convinced that in all the sovietised countries the trend of government is identical, and that the differences are being rapidly removed. It is the similarity between the regimes, and the close imitation by all of the past history of the Soviet Union, which need to be stressed for Western readers, to whom the theory and practice of communism are still woefully unfamiliar. It is no doubt true that beneath the surface, national characters remain as distinct as ever. But they have no direct political effects.

In the last chapter I have given my own conclusions on the development of Eastern Europe. They fall into three sections. The first concerns Soviet foreign policy and Eastern Europe's place in it. The second considers the nature of the new regimes, the concepts of 'political' and 'economic' democracy, and the forces which support and oppose the new rulers. The last pages are an attempt to explain the disruptive influence of Eastern Europe in world affairs in the twentieth century, and to place it in some sort of world perspective.

## NOTE ON PROPER NAMES

GREEK names are transliterated from the Greek to the Latin alphabet in the normally accepted way. Bulgarian and Russian names are transliterated from the Cyrillic, and should be pronounced as written. The only unfamiliar combination to English readers will be 'zh'. This approximates to 's' in 'pleasure' or to the French 'j' in 'jour'. Where a 'z' or an 's' is followed by an aspirate, it is shown by an apostrophe before it. Thus 'z'h' or 's'h' should be distinguished from 'zh' or 'sh'. For the aspirate in Bulgarian or Russian names I have used a simple 'h', which is not very different from its sound, rather than the 'kh' beloved by many phoneticians, which is meaningless in English.

The other East European languages use the Latin alphabet with various modifications (Serbo-Croatian using the Latin in Croatia and the Cyrillic in Serbia). As it is beyond my power to reduce these various uses of Latin letters to a system both uniform and intelligible, I have kept the exact spelling used in each country—except for certain well-known names which have a recognised European spelling, e.g. Prague instead of Praha. The following is an approximate explanation of the main letters in proper names of each language which differ from English. If this advice is followed, names will be pronounced intelligibly. No attempt, however, is made to deal with quality of vowels or stress of syllables.

### POLISH

- sz English sh in 'show'.
- ś English s in 'sue'.
- cz English ch in 'church'.
- ć English t in 'venture'.
- ł varies between ll in 'dull' and w in 'wed'
- ń English n in 'tenure'.
- ą a nasalised version of French on in 'bon'.
- ę varies between en in 'hen' and French en in 'bien'.
- rz as s in 'pleasure' or French j in 'jour'.
- ż the same as rz.

- c English ts in 'lets'.
- j English y in 'yet'.

## CZECH

- c and j as in Polish.
- š as Polish sz; č as Polish cz; ň as Polish *ń*; ž as Polish *ž*;  
t' approximately as Polish *ć*.
- ř varies between r followed by a y and the sound of a  
Polish rz. Sometimes sounds like English sh in 'show'.
- ě English ye in 'yell'.

## SERBO-CROATIAN

- c, ć and j as in Polish.
- č, š and ž as in Czech.

## HUNGARIAN

- c and j as in Polish.
- s English sh in 'show'.
- sz English s in 'so'.
- cs English ch in 'church'.
- zs English s in 'pleasure' or French j in 'jour'.
- ly varies between ll in 'allure' and y in 'yet'.
- gy English d in 'verdure'.
- ny English n in 'tenure'.
- ö as in German.
- ü as in German.
- ő, ú lengthened forms of ö and ü.
- a English o in 'hot'.
- á English a in 'father'.

## RUMANIAN

- ă English er in 'weather'.
- â English e in 'garment'.
- ș English sh in 'show'.
- ț English ts in 'lets'.
- j French j in 'jour'.
- oa approximates to French oi in 'toit'.
- g before a, o and u as in English, before e and i as dg in  
'bridge'. When ge or gi comes before a, o or u, the i is not  
pronounced but the g has the sound of dg in 'bridge'.  
When gh comes before e or i, the h is not pronounced but  
the g is as English in 'get' or 'give'.

- c before a, o and u as in English, before e and i as ch in 'church'. When ci or ce comes before a, o or u, the e or i is not pronounced but the c has the sound of ch in 'church'. When ch comes before e or i the h is not pronounced but the c is as in English 'cat'.

## ALBANIAN

- ç English ch in 'church'.  
x English ds in 'heads'.  
xh English dg in 'bridge'.  
ll English ll in 'allure'.  
gj English dg in 'bridge'



*Part One*  
*BACKGROUND*

CHAPTER ONE  
THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

THE EAST EUROPEAN NATIONS

**E**ASTERN Europe, as it is understood in this book, the area stretching from the Baltic in the north to the Mediterranean in the south, and from the frontiers of Germany, Austria and Italy in the west to those of the Soviet Union in the east, is inhabited by at least twelve nations. Seven of these—Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats, Serbs and Bulgarians—are Slavs. The others are the Hungarians, Rumanians, Greeks, Turks and Albanians. To the twelve should perhaps be added two more Slav groups whose claim to separate nationhood is a little uncertain—Macedonians and Montenegrins. Another special group are Slavs of Moslem religion (Serbo-Croat-speaking in Bosnia, Bulgarian-speaking ('Pomak') in Thrace), whose outlook, formed by their religion, is so different from that of their Christian neighbours as to constitute something like separate nationality.

The Poles are the most numerous of the East European nations, and have the longest uninterrupted historical tradition. The Polish state took shape after the establishment of Christianity in the tenth century, and remained independent until the end of the eighteenth. Poland had to face constant pressure from her German neighbours—first from the religious order of the Teutonic knights and then from the secular principality of Prussia. In the east she was for long periods at war with the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, which later became the Russian empire. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Poland was a Great Power, and her neighbours were still weak, but in the seventeenth she was exhausted by Swedish invasions and wars with Russia, and in 1772 began the partitions between Russia, Austria and Prussia which were completed by 1795. From then until 1918 Poland was divided into three portions—Pomerania under Prussia, Galicia under Austria, and the 'Congress Kingdom' and historic Lithuania under Russia.

The Czechs had a national state in the Kingdom of Bohemia, which lasted with varying degrees of independence from the tenth century until 1620. Its heroic period was the Hussite wars of the early fifteenth century, when the Czech religious reformers defended themselves successfully against 'Crusaders' summoned by the Pope from all over Europe. In the sixteenth century Bohemia became a part of the Habsburg empire, and after 1620 was subjected to a process of religious persecution and germanisation. Not until the nineteenth century did a Czech national revival begin, and independence was restored by the collapse of the Habsburg empire in 1918. The Slovaks have some claim to be considered the descendants of the Slavs who established a Moravian kingdom in the Danube basin in the ninth century, but the arrival of the Hungarian conquerors at the end of that century engulfed them. They remained subjects of Hungary, without any national self-government, until 1918. Then, on the grounds of their close affinity with the Czechs, and somewhat vague promises of autonomy made by the Pittsburgh agreement,<sup>1</sup> their political leaders agreed to form a common state with them.

The Hungarians entered Central Europe at the end of the ninth century, and conquered the Slav kingdom of Moravia, which then occupied the middle Danube valley. In the year 1000 their king accepted the Catholic form of Christianity, and his successors took their place among the established Christian rulers of medieval Europe. Nothing remained of their Asiatic origin but their language. The kingdom of Hungary was not confined to the area inhabited by people who spoke the Hungarian language, but was extended by conquest to the natural boundaries of the Central European plain—the Carpathians, the river Sava and the foothills of the Alps. Thus for a thousand years Hungary has cut the Slav block in two, separating the Czechs, Poles and Slovaks in the north from the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in the south. Within its frontiers were large numbers of Rumanians, Croats and Slovaks, who were treated as subject nations. By the treaty of Trianon of 1920, Hungary was reduced to a territory which was supposed to correspond to that inhabited by Hungarians, but which in fact left some three million Hungarians as subjects of neighbour states.

<sup>1</sup> The agreement signed in 1918 in Pittsburgh by Professor T. G. Masaryk (later President of Czechoslovakia) and representatives of the Slovak emigrants in the United States. The agreement promised self-government for Slovaks within the new republic, but the terms were not made clear. Accusations of bad faith were subsequently made by both sides.

The Rumanians are the descendants of the Dacians, a people who were conquered by the Romans in the second century A.D., and under Roman rule accepted Latin as their language. After the departure of the Romans, the country was conquered in turn by Slavs, Hungarians, Mongols and Turks. But throughout the centuries of foreign rule, the people kept their separate national character. Their language to-day, in spite of many Slav and other words, remains predominantly Latin in both vocabulary and structure. The chief cultural and religious influences in Rumanian history have been Byzantine, and to-day the majority of Rumanians belong to the Orthodox Church. The only exception to this was the important Uniate fraction among the Rumanians of Transylvania.<sup>1</sup> During the Middle Ages there were periods when the Rumanian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were independent, but in the sixteenth century they were conquered by the Turks, who ruled them directly or indirectly for over three hundred years.

The South Slavs settled in the Balkans in the sixth and seventh centuries, at a time when the Byzantine empire was weakened by wars in the East. The Slovenes penetrated far into Austria, but were driven back by Charles the Great and his successors to their present home at the north-east corner of the Adriatic. They never had an independent State of their own, but were ruled by Austria right up to 1918. The Croats founded a state in the ninth century, and had independent relations with Venice and Constantinople. In the twelfth century Croatia was conquered by the Hungarians, and incorporated, with a measure of autonomy, in the kingdom of Hungary. Both the Slovenes and the Croats accepted Christianity from Rome, and until 1918 were linked more closely with Catholic Central Europe than with the Balkans.

The Serbs were converted to Christianity by emissaries from the South, from Constantinople, and have remained since then an Orthodox nation. The main influences in their history have been Byzantine rather than western. They had an independent state for some centuries, and were for a brief period the strongest power in the Balkans. In the fifteenth century they were finally conquered by the Turks. The Bulgarians are also Orthodox, and

<sup>1</sup> The Uniate Church was founded in eastern Poland at the end of the sixteenth century, and introduced in Transylvania in the eighteenth. It was hierarchically subordinate to the Pope, but its priests were allowed to marry and it could use the local languages in church services instead of Latin. The purpose of its foundation was to win over the people of the Rumanian and Russian borderlands to Rome. In fact it came to be a centre of Ukrainian and Rumanian nationalism, directed as much against Poland and Hungary as against Russia. See also below, pp. 289-90.

were still more profoundly influenced by Byzantine culture than the Serbs. The first Bulgarian state was founded in the ninth century by a conquering Mongol tribe called Bulgars, who subsequently accepted the language and customs of the Slav inhabitants whom they found on their arrival, who had themselves occupied the country some centuries earlier. Medieval Bulgaria enjoyed several brief periods of civilisation and military power. It was conquered by the Turks a few years earlier than Serbia.

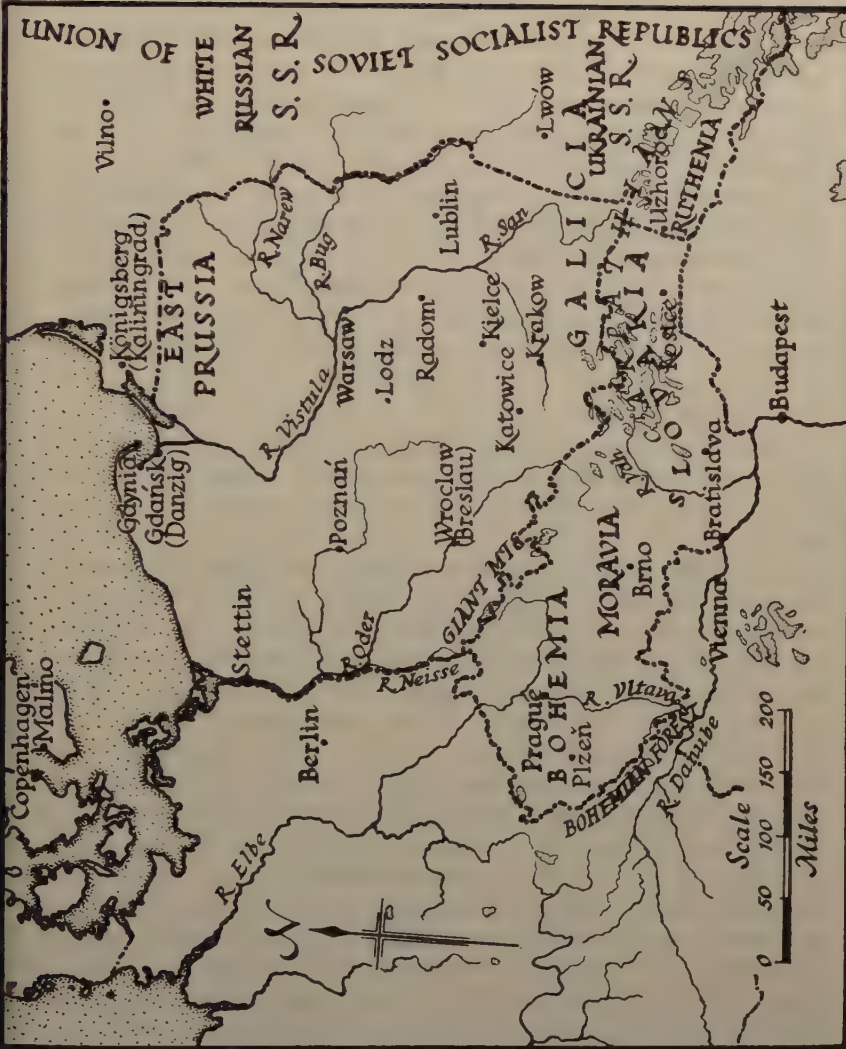
The Greeks have of course a far longer and more glorious history than any other East European people. They were the dominant nation of the Byzantine empire, whose thousand-year rule was brought to an end by the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Under the Turkish regime the Greeks enjoyed more rights than the Balkan Slavs. They controlled the higher offices in the Orthodox Church, and also played a large part in the commerce of the Turkish empire. The Albanians are probably the most direct descendants of the Illyrians of Roman times. Their country was ruled in turn by many different conquerors, until it fell to the Turks in 1467 after a fierce resistance led by the national hero Skanderbeg. After the Turkish conquest the majority of the Albanians became Moslems. Catholic and Orthodox minorities also exist in north and south respectively.

The Turkish empire in Europe fell gradually to pieces during the nineteenth century. The Serbs revolted in 1804, and the Greeks did the same in the twenties. The Rumanians and Bulgarians got their independence in the second half of the century, less by their own efforts than as a result of wars between Russia and Turkey. Macedonia remained in the Ottoman empire till 1912, when it became the object of disputes between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece. Albania was made an independent state by agreement between the Great Powers in 1913.

In Central Europe, the Hungarians obtained most of the substance of independence by the Compromise of 1867 with Emperor Francis Joseph. Under the 'Dual System' which it established, Austria and Hungary had separate governments. Each controlled internal affairs within its own territory, while foreign policy and military affairs were conducted in common for the whole empire. Under this system the Germans and Hungarians were privileged nations, and the Rumanians and Slavs had an inferior status. The collapse in the First World War of the three empires of Germany, Russia and Austria made possible the restoration of Poland. The disintegration of Austria also allowed

Land over 3,000 ft.  
is indicated by  
dotted areas.

POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA



the Czechs to form a new state together with the Slovaks, who had been subject to Hungary. Rumania was able to annex Transylvania, Bukovina and part of the Banat from Austria-Hungary, and Bessarabia from Russia.<sup>1</sup> From the southern territories of Austria-Hungary was formed the new state of Yugoslavia, which also absorbed Montenegro. The creation of Yugoslavia was the result of a movement which had grown strong during the last decades of the Habsburg empire, and which aimed at the creation of a single state of all the South Slav nations, on a basis of equal federal rights for each nation. This conception was opposed by the leading politicians in Belgrade, who wished instead to create a 'Greater Serbia', a territorial extension of the pre-war kingdom.

#### THE RULING CLASSES

The ruling class of the East European countries on the eve of the Second World War was composed of four elements in varying mixtures—landowners, business men, bureaucrats and intellectuals.

In Poland, in the pre-1918 Kingdom of Hungary, and in Rumania, big landowners were both politically and economically powerful. Up to the end of the First World War they were the chief element in the ruling class. Formal serfdom was abolished in the middle of the nineteenth century, but the dependence of the peasants on the landowners was only slightly reduced, as there was no large-scale redistribution of land. When American cereals began seriously to compete in the European market, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, many Polish, Hungarian and Rumanian landed estates were ruined. A large part of the 'gentry' (owners of a few hundreds of acres) sold their land, and went to the towns, where they entered the civil service or free professions, or became professional army officers. Their land was acquired, partly by the 'magnates' (owners of thousands, or tens of thousands, of acres), and partly by the banks.<sup>2</sup> These changes did

<sup>1</sup> These regions are shown on the map on pp. 8-9. In both Transylvania and the Banat, which had been part of Hungary for centuries, the Rumanians were the most numerous nationality, while Hungarians and Germans formed considerable minorities. The population of Bukovina was partly Rumanian and partly Ukrainian. In Bessarabia the Rumanians were the most numerous nationality, followed by Ukrainians, Russians, Bulgarians, Germans and Turks. Northern Bessarabia had been acquired by Russia from Turkey in 1812, Southern Bessarabia in 1878. For further historical and ethnical details see R. W. Seton-Watson, *History of the Rumanians*, and Macartney, *Hungary and her Successors*.

<sup>2</sup> An exception to this statement is Galicia, where a large part of the land sold by impoverished Polish landowners passed into the hands of Polish peasants. See Wariner, *The Economics of Peasant Farming*, pp. 22-3.

not lead to any marked class conflict between the magnates and the gentry, though this might have been expected on purely economic grounds. Both belonged to the same traditional aristocracy, and had a similar history and education. They were intermarried, and treated each other as social equals. The aristocracy considered itself a single class. The children of the gentry who had settled in the towns kept the aristocratic mentality of their fathers. Though their economic position was that of a middle class, their mentality was different from that of either the West European or the Balkan bourgeoisie.

After the First World War, land reforms were carried out in Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The landowning class lost the economic basis of their political power. The political basis was at the same time removed by the introduction of universal suffrage. The result of these measures was that the landowners became a small and relatively uninfluential element in the ruling classes of Yugoslavia and Rumania. In Poland, land reform was on a more modest scale, and with the passage of time the pace of redistribution was slowed up. In Hungary only a small part of the land changed hands. Thus in both these countries landowners continued to play an important part in politics. Power was in effect shared between the great landowners and the aristocratic middle class described above. Even in Rumania and Croatia the aristocratic origin of a portion of the middle class had political and cultural effects.

In the Balkans landowners were unimportant even before 1918. In Serbia and Bulgaria the native feudal aristocracy was destroyed by the invading Turks in the fifteenth century. The Turks themselves created no hereditary landowning class. Such land as was in the possession of Turkish pashas or beys at the time of liberation was divided among Serbian or Bulgarian peasants. In Greece large estates had slightly more importance, but a reform carried out by Venizelos on the eve of the First World War went far towards eliminating them. In Albania a class of big landowners formed a pseudo-feudal ruling class in the southern, or Tosk, provinces, while the northerners, or Ghegs, were organised on a tribal basis somewhat similar to the Scottish clans.

An East European business class came into being towards the end of the nineteenth century. The earliest industrial centres were Warsaw, Lodz and Dombrowa-Silesia in Poland, the Czech lands, and Budapest. A Czech business class grew up in Bohemia and Moravia in competition with the German from the end of the



## SOUTH-EAST

The names of towns given are those officially used by  
alternative names are also in common use: Novi Sad:



nineteenth century. In Poland and Hungary, the first business men tended to be Jews or Germans. Poles began to enter business shortly before the First World War, particularly in the provinces ruled by Prussia. Hungarian Jewish industrialists and bankers to some extent intermarried with the Hungarian landowning families and had a share in their political power, though they were seldom prominent in public life. It was not until after the First World War that ethnic Hungarians began to go into business in considerable numbers. Both Polish and Hungarian business men thus found themselves in direct economic conflict with the Jews. This gave a strong stimulus to anti-semitism, which until then had been mainly an intellectual and religious phenomenon, with a certain material basis in the form of rivalry in the free professions. In the thirties the growth of ethnic Polish and Hungarian business classes was rapid and was accompanied by the spread of fascist ideas. The process was encouraged by the governments, and a form of State capitalism came into being, under which it was hard to say whether the politicians controlled or were controlled by the new business men. In Czechoslovakia the Jewish element was too small to produce these effects, and the political traditions of the Czech people were opposed to anti-semitism. The Czech business class grew in numbers and produced its own wealthy capitalists. But the balance of social classes and the democratic outlook of the nation made the Czech bourgeoisie resemble that of Western Europe rather than of neighbouring countries.

Rumanian development resembled that of Poland and Hungary, but at a more primitive level. In 1918 most of Rumanian industry and banking was in Jewish hands, but certain ethnic Rumanian families, mostly of 'gentry' origin and connected with the dominant Liberal Party, played an important part. The following twenty years brought a further influx of ethnic Rumanians into business, of whom many were of humbler social origin (for instance, sons of small officials or of wealthy peasants), and from the newly acquired provinces (especially Transylvania and Bukovina). Their competition with Jewish business led to violent anti-semitism. In Rumania, as in Poland and Hungary, the governments of the thirties had a policy of State capitalism, which favoured especially metallurgical, chemical and engineering heavy industry.<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the Second World War the interests of the State and of big business were hardly separable.

<sup>1</sup> The social and political effects of this economic development are discussed in a work by the Communist intellectual Pătrășcanu, *Sub trei dictaturi* (Bucarest, 1945).

The business class of Serbia and Bulgaria was of more recent growth. It was derived from the wealthy peasants, pig-dealers, moneylenders and craftsmen of the villages and small towns. At the end of the last century contacts between these elements and western business interests (Austrian, German, French and British) developed, and something like a capitalist class came into being. After 1918 the comparatively large state Yugoslavia offered new opportunities of enrichment to the Serbian business men, who tried to use political power to impose their will on the older bourgeoisie of Croatia. In Bulgaria, impoverished by defeat, there were fewer prizes to be won. The Albanian bourgeoisie had not advanced beyond the village shopkeeper or usurer stage. Greek capitalism was much older: in a sense it may be said to go back to Byzantine or even classical times. It was based mainly on import and export business, and on shipping. After 1913 a tobacco industry grew rapidly in Macedonia and Thrace, and after the First World War factories sprang up in the Athens-Peiraeus and Salonica areas.

An important element in the ruling classes were the heads of the bureaucracy. The Polish bureaucracy was based on a mixture of Russian, Prussian and Austrian traditions, with the first on the whole predominating. The Czechs had been trained in the Austrian school. Hungarian and Croatian officials owed something to Austrian and something to oriental models, while the bureaucratic traditions of Greece, Rumania, Serbia and Bulgaria were entirely Turkish. Corruption was undoubtedly widespread in East European bureaucracy. At the low levels it was due to bad pay, which made it almost impossible for officials, with families to support, to refuse bribes for minor transgressions of the law. At the top, corruption took the form of embezzlement by ministers or senior officials of 'discretionary funds', sale of favourable tariffs to foreign business interests, large bribes from employers to labour inspectors, and similar abuses.

A second unpleasant characteristic of bureaucracy was brutality. Peasants were often robbed and beaten by gendarmes. In the prisons torture was widely used, particularly for political offences. Even when bureaucrats were not guilty of physical violence, they showed an utter contempt for 'the masses'. Only too frequently the main ambition of the peasant's son who obtained higher education was to secure a place in some sort of government employment, where he would be able to parade his superiority over the people of his native village. The bureaucracy

was enormously inflated to give jobs of this kind, but in the slump of the thirties the strain was too much for it. There were the thousands of 'unemployed intellectuals', who formed an important element of instability in Danubian politics.<sup>1</sup>

The professional class or 'intelligentsia' was not strictly a separate class. Part of it belonged to the ruling class, and part provided the nearest equivalent in Eastern Europe to a 'middle class' of a western type. Before 1918 the intelligentsia of Poland, Hungary and Rumania was recruited partly from the Jewish population and partly from formerly landowning 'gentry' families. After 1918 the great development of popular education opened it to sons of peasants, small officials and skilled workers. The accessibility to the masses of the education ladder—the main means of rising into the ruling class—varied between countries. It was least in Hungary and greatest in Czechoslovakia. The education system of the Balkan countries had already before 1918 been comparatively 'democratic' in the sense of opportunity, and this was still more the case afterwards. But throughout Eastern Europe it was of course more difficult for children of workers or poor peasants to rise than for those more favourably placed, and the depression of the thirties made things still worse. The quality of education varied greatly. It was highest in Czechoslovakia and Poland, probably lowest in Rumania.<sup>2</sup> The leading universities of all countries maintained a fairly high standard, but in the village schools teaching all too often degenerated to the three R's plus a training in national hatred.

Higher education had high prestige in Eastern Europe. Even bureaucrats were not ashamed, but honoured, to call themselves 'intellectuals'. It was especially valuable to put 'Dr' before one's name. Lawyers and professors were prominent in politics, both in the pseudo-democratic period of party politics and under the dictatorships which replaced them. Apart from those who became public political figures, there were many others whose task it was to produce legal and ideological theories to justify the policy and methods of the various regimes. But the intelligentsia was also a revolutionary force. It was through it that foreign political ideas reached Eastern Europe. In the nineteen

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to add that this gloomy picture is not applicable to Czechoslovakia whose bureaucrats were on the whole both honest and humane.

<sup>2</sup> Rumanian universities of course produced some first-class and many competent graduates. But the prevalence of fascist and anti-semitic toughs, seeking not knowledge but an opportunity to beat up Jewish students or shopkeepers, was a blot on the Rumanian education system. The same phenomenon was also found to some extent in Poland. Chauvinist propaganda passed for teaching of history in the greater part of the Balkan peninsula as well.

century, students who visited France or Germany brought back with them the ideas of liberalism and nationalism, which profoundly affected their countries' development. After 1918 it was through the younger generation of the intelligentsia that communism, and later fascism, spread in Eastern Europe.

The East European intelligentsia arose from contact with the West. Scientific discoveries, literary and artistic influences, and the main political ideas, came from France, Germany or the Anglo-Saxon countries. East European intellectuals felt themselves to be part of a single European culture, and their ambition was to be accepted as equals by their western colleagues—as indeed many of them fully deserved to be. But if the East European intellectuals were western in outlook, this cannot be said of their peoples as a whole. The social structure of Eastern Europe more closely resembled that of Russia, or even of Asiatic countries, than that of France, Britain or Germany. This will be seen by a brief description of the peasantry and working class.

#### PEASANTS AND WORKERS

Eastern Europe is still a predominantly agricultural region. In the thirties the peasantry formed fifty to eighty per cent of the population in all countries of the region except Czechoslovakia.<sup>1</sup>

Before 1918 the agriculture of Poland, Austria-Hungary and the old kingdom of Rumania was largely based on great landed estates, while in the Balkans small holdings prevailed. After 1918 less than one million acres were redistributed in rump Hungary, which left most of the great estates almost or completely intact. In Poland, disagreement between the political parties retarded the execution of land reform, and in the thirties such distribution as had been decided was still further delayed. Between 1921 and 1937 about six million acres were divided up. In Rumania more than ten million acres were transferred from big landowners to peasants. In the following twenty years it is true that many of the new owners were compelled by economic pressure to sell their land, of which some found its way back to the old landowners, and some was acquired by wealthy peasants, who began to constitute a new class of landowners. Nevertheless the contrasts in the size of holdings were very much smaller in Rumania than

<sup>1</sup> Approximate figures for the proportion of peasants in the thirties are: 34 per cent of the population in Czechoslovakia, 55 per cent in Hungary, 50 per cent in Greece, 63 per cent in Poland, 75 per cent in Yugoslavia, 78 per cent in Rumania, and 80 per cent in Bulgaria.

in Hungary or Poland. In Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia fairly radical land reforms also took place. It is probable that a similar process occurred after the reform as in Rumania, but this cannot be stated with certainty owing to the absence of recent statistics. Bulgaria and Greece were already countries of small holdings. In Albania large estates continued to exist in the southern provinces.

The social and economic problems of the peasantry differed in the two types of society—the reformed and the unreformed—and deserve brief separate consideration.

In Hungary and Poland there was a large class of landless agricultural workers. Some of these were casual labourers, who found employment during the seasons of greatest agricultural activity, and were given low money wages supplemented by some payment in grain. For a large part of the year they were unemployed, and drifted round the country in search of work. Others were estate servants permanently employed in the various jobs connected with the upkeep of the big estates. They had the advantage of a certain minimum security, but enjoyed less personal freedom. On some estates housing and nourishment were extremely bad.

Two features of this system are worth stressing. One was the existence of a permanent reserve of agricultural labour, which the landlords used to keep down wages. The political power of the landlords enabled them to some extent to prevent this superfluous labour from being wholly absorbed by industry. The other feature was the weakness or absence of agricultural workers' trade unions. In Hungary such unions had been founded in the 1890's, when they carried out 'harvest strikes' which seriously alarmed the government.<sup>1</sup> Special legislation had then been introduced to prevent strikes of land labourers. After the counter-revolution of 1919 trade union activity in the villages was made quite impossible. In Poland similar unions appeared in 1919.<sup>2</sup> They were to some extent led by communists, and after the war of 1920 with the Soviet Union the authorities tended to treat them as subversive organisations.

On the eve of the Second World War there was considerable pressure by public opinion in both Hungary and Poland in favour of land reform. Its opponents tried to justify their attitude by economic arguments, insisting that a reform would dangerously

<sup>1</sup> See Kovács, *A néma forradalom* ('The Silent Revolution') (Budapest 1937).

<sup>2</sup> See article by Misko in *Voprosy Istorii*, the Soviet historical journal, of October 1948, entitled 'Revolutsionn[oe dvizhe]nie v Polshi v 1918-19 godah'. ('The Revolutionary Movement in Poland in 1918-19'.)

dislocate production. There was of course some force in these arguments. But the social and political discontent caused by the great contrasts in wealth represented a still more serious danger.

Land reform could only be a step forward: it could not solve the problems of the peasants. This was shown by the experience of the Balkan countries and of Rumania. The new owners of land received little help from the governments. They were poorly supplied with livestock and even with essential agricultural tools. Credit was hard to get, and many peasants became heavily indebted to village usurers or banks. Technical education was neglected. Sons of peasants who obtained higher education only too often studied law, settled down in the towns and cut themselves off from peasant life. There was a shortage of trained agricultural engineers. Co-operatives were managed by the prosperous minority of the peasants in their own interests, and were of little use to the smallholders.

These factors weakened the smallholders already in the 1920's: with the slump of the thirties their plight became desperate. Agricultural prices fell more steeply, and recovered more slowly, than those of industrial goods. The few essential things which the peasants had to buy in the towns—salt, oil, some articles of clothing—became intolerably expensive. The burden of debts and of taxation was enormously increased.

On the eve of the war, between two-thirds and three-quarters of the peasants of Eastern Europe were smallholders, whose land was insufficient to support their families. The fundamental problem was overpopulation. The general density of population in any of these countries was very much smaller than in Western Europe. But the number of people engaged in agriculture per unit of agricultural land was very much higher. Granted the low level of industrialisation and the backward methods of agriculture, Eastern Europe was overpopulated. The yield of crops was low, and had made very little progress for the preceding fifty years. In existing circumstances there was not enough land to go round, and there was not enough work for the population living on the land. On a given unit of land in Yugoslavia, Rumania or Bulgaria three times as many people produced three times less than in Denmark.<sup>1</sup> One or two members of the average smallholder

<sup>1</sup> Density of agricultural population was 36.6 per square kilometre in Denmark, 116.3 in Rumania, 157.4 in Yugoslavia. Output of wheat per hectare in quintals was 29.2 in Denmark, 9.1 in Rumania, 11 in Yugoslavia. These figures come from Madgearu, *Evoluția economiei românești*, 1940. They are of course approximate, as both population and output changed year by year. But they give a substantially true picture.

family were obliged to seek work on the land of a larger holding or in industry. Many failed for long periods to find such work. Very few peasants were completely unemployed, in the sense in which workers in industrial centres may be unemployed. But almost every peasant from the smallholder class was permanently under-employed. Experts calculated that between one-third and one-half of the labour power of the villages was superfluous.

With the best will in the world, it was difficult to find a solution to this problem, and impossible to devise a rapid one. Long-term results could be hoped from a general improvement of methods of agriculture. Such improvement required a great increase of technical education, provision by the State of cheap credit facilities and tools, new roads and railways, drainage and irrigation schemes, regrouping of strip holdings into economically workable units, and the organisation of much more efficient and far-reaching forms of co-operatives. Improvement of agricultural methods would make possible specialisation in more valuable crops, such as vegetable oils, industrial plants or fodder, the development of livestock and dairy produce, and a reduction of the hitherto excessive cultivation of cereals. Side by side with these measures in agriculture, it was essential to develop industry. And this meant a careful planning of available resources, and the creation of such industries as could be based on native raw materials, provide some of the needs of the home market, and afford employment to an increasing proportion of the excess population of the villages.

The need for such an agricultural and industrial policy was universally recognised in Eastern Europe between the two World Wars, but very little was achieved. Industry made considerable progress, but in haphazard fashion. It was determined rather by the wishes of foreign capital interests than by the country's real needs. These of course often, but by no means always, coincided. The agricultural policy of the governments was mainly devoted to the protection of the minority (15-20 per cent) of medium farmers, who produced for the big internal markets and for export trade, and neglected the smallholders. For instance, in Yugoslavia a policy of high grain prices benefited the medium farmers of the grain-growing provinces of Slavonia and Voivodina, but harmed the smallholders of the wooded and mountainous districts of Bosnia, Dalmatia or Montenegro, who had to buy their food. But the medium farmers had more influence in the political parties, and so were able to exercise more pressure on the govern-

ments than the smallholders. Most of the time the governments had no systematic agricultural policy. They confined themselves to carrying on 'somehow' and making demagogic speeches about the stern solid virtues of the sound peasantry. But when they did try to formulate a consistent policy, for instance King Carol's governments in 1938-40 in Rumania, their aim seemed to be to create a strong yeoman farmer class, owning from 25 to 120 acres of land. In this they were following the policy of the Imperial Russian statesman Stolypin, or of Hitler's Minister of Agriculture Walter Darré. But if agriculture was to be based on holdings of this size, what was to happen to the majority of the peasantry for whom there would be no land? The governments had no answer. Spokesmen shook their heads sadly, murmured about industry, and left it at that.

All governments were agreed in detestation of a policy of co-operative cultivation. Yet there would appear to be much to be said for co-operative farming in these countries, at least in the grain-growing plainlands. It would make possible a rational use of machinery, and prevent the exploitation of the poorer peasants by the wealthier. Such a policy would however only win popular support if it were pursued without the injustices and excesses which occurred in Russia in 1929-33.

Land reform continued to be the desire of the Hungarian and Polish peasants, many of whom did not think further ahead. In the Balkan countries the misery of the thirties brought a great disillusionment to those who had expected great things of the land reforms. But the reaction of the peasants to poverty and under-employment varied according to the generation. The older men tended to regard their misfortunes as temporary and abnormal, and to hope for a return of the better times they had known. The younger men, who had never known anything but misery, regarded it as normal, and were more inclined to attribute it to a fault in the whole social system. They listened with greater sympathy than their fathers to revolutionary propaganda.

A separate working class, with a mode of life and outlook quite distinct from those of bourgeoisie or peasantry, was an important factor in Western and Central Poland, in the Czech lands, and in Budapest. In all these regions trade unions were firmly established by 1918, and even in the face of police pressure between the wars they kept their hold on the workers. In the south-eastern countries industry was less advanced, but it was growing quickly. Rumania was ahead of her southern neighbours. The petroleum

industry, centred on Ploëști and the Prahova valley, was the oldest. But during the thirties metallurgical industry, supported by very high protective tariffs, made rapid progress. Bucarest and Brașov were important industrial centres, and there were others in various parts of the country, especially in Transylvania. In Yugoslavia the most industrialised region was Croatia, which had been developed already under the pre-1918 Hungarian regime. In Serbia progress was made in the thirties. In Bulgaria there were the big coal mines of Pernik, a number of factories in and round Sofia, textile mills in the central provinces and a flourishing tobacco industry in Plovdiv. Tobacco was also the largest industry of Greece, but other factories grew up in the Athens area. Albania's only industrial resource was oil, which began to be mined in the twenties.

The problems of the skilled worker in Eastern Europe were much the same as in the West, and so do not need much attention here. But a special problem was provided by the unskilled workers from the villages. These were peasants whose families owned small holdings which provided part of the subsistence needs of their members, but who came to the factories to earn a bit more, in order to buy the few essential town-made products (clothes, salt, lamp-oil, etc.) which they could not do without, and to pay taxes and debts. They were therefore content with less than the wage required by workers who lived in the towns and maintained their families there. They provided a useful reserve of labour to the employers. When industry prospered, the influx of new recruits from the villages kept wages down, and when times were bad the village recruits returned to a life of under-employment and under-nourishment at home. They were not recorded in the official unemployment statistics.

These conditions were a serious obstacle to Rumanian and Balkan working-class organisation. An additional difficulty was the hostility of the police, which was inclined to view all trade unions as 'nests of Bolshevism'. The Rumanian trade unions had few liberties even in the Parliamentary period. Two big strikes, in 1929 in the Jiu valley coal-mines and in 1933 in the Grivitsa railway workshops in Bucarest, were suppressed with loss of life. The unions were formally abolished in 1938 when King Carol's dictatorship was created. Bulgarian trade unions were strong immediately after the First World War, but were much weakened in the repression of 1923. In 1934 they were abolished after Velchev's military *coup d'état* and replaced by 'corporative' organisations.

In Yugoslavia trade unions grew rapidly, and organised a number of serious strikes, during the disordered years 1919-21. In the following years they lost ground and suffered from police repression. They were perhaps strongest in Slovenia, where the traditions of Austrian Social Democracy had left some mark. In Croatia, there were special nationalist trade unions, controlled by the Croatian Peasant Party. In Serbia the Stojadinović government of 1935-8 created a new trade union organisation, known as 'jugoras'. Its members wore uniforms, and the organisation was modelled on Mussolini's fascist 'corporations'. The Greek trade unions became active in the early thirties, especially in the tobacco centres in the north. A general strike in Kavalla, organised by communist-led trade unions, was the immediate occasion of the installation of General Metaxas's dictatorship, under which trade union activity became impossible.

#### NATIONALISM

In Eastern Europe nationalism is a more powerful and explosive force than in the West. This is of course not surprising in view of the history of the region. Many nations, none of which has a large population, are concentrated into a comparatively small space. A series of migrations, conquests and reconquests have caused an intermixture of nationalities in certain areas, which cannot be straightened out by any 'ethnic frontier'. Moreover all these nations have experienced long periods of foreign rule, and this has made them particularly sensitive in questions affecting their independence and national prestige.

But the East European nationalism of the last twenty years cannot be explained entirely by these causes. Nationalism was systematically propagated by the governments, almost as a State religion. In the schools children were taught to regard neighbouring nations as culturally and morally inferior to their own. In the teaching of history the greatest emphasis was laid on the brief periods in the Middle Ages when each nation had dominated areas at present held by its neighbours. These ephemeral medieval frontiers were represented as the 'natural' boundaries of the nation. Nothing was done to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between neighbours. For instance, many Rumanians had some knowledge of France, some even had good knowledge, but hardly any one knew anything at all about Yugoslavia, Bulgaria or Poland. Intellectuals prided themselves on their ignorance of the benighted Balkans.

Eastern Europe bristled with minority problems. In 1939, of a population of about 110 million, some 22 million people belonged to minorities.<sup>1</sup> In Poland the German minority was fairly well treated, but could never reconcile itself to the fact that it was no longer the ruling nation. The Ukrainian and White Russian minorities were badly treated. In Czechoslovakia better treatment was given to national minorities than anywhere else in Eastern Europe. But neither the Germans of the Czech lands nor the Hungarians of Slovakia and Ruthenia could forget that they had once been the master nation. In Rumania and the Balkans almost all minorities were badly treated. The exception were the Germans, who in Yugoslavia and Rumania received favoured treatment as a counter-weight to the Hungarians. They had in practice something like cultural autonomy and greater political freedom than the members of the majority nations. In Hungary their political independence was more restricted, but their economic position was, as also in Yugoslavia and Rumania, extremely favourable. The other national minorities (for instance, Hungarians in Yugoslavia and Rumania, Albanians in Yugoslavia, Bulgarians in Rumania, and Turks in Bulgaria) suffered serious disabilities. They had insufficient schools in their own language, were ruled by officials of the majority nation who did not speak their language, had little opportunity of official employment, and were exposed to various economic disadvantages. In part this was due to a deliberate policy of national discrimination by the governments, in part to the more general fact that the regimes were oppressive dictatorships, which weighed heavily on the majority nation, as well as on the minority.

A special case were areas of mixed population, where it was difficult to speak of 'majority' and 'minority' nations, as these had

<sup>1</sup> According to the official census figures of the various states the numbers of national minorities were as follows (to the nearest 10,000, census year in brackets): Poland (1931)—Ukrainians 3,230,000; White Russians 990,000; Germans 740,000. Czechoslovakia (1930)—Germans 3,230,000; Hungarians 690,000; Poles 80,000. Hungary (1920)—Germans 550,000; Slovaks 140,000; South Slavs 80,000. Rumania (1930)—Hungarians 1,430,000; Germans, 740,000; Ukrainians 580,000; Russians 420,000; Bulgarians 360,000. Yugoslavia (1931)—Germans 510,000; Hungarians 470,000; Albanians 440,000; Rumanians 230,000. Bulgaria (1934)—Turks 620,000. Of these figures, the Czechoslovak and the Rumanian are probably the most reliable. The Yugoslav figures for Albanians, and the Polish figures for Ukrainians and White Russians, fall far short of the truth at the time, possibly not showing much more than half the real numbers. Jews numbered 2,730,000 in Poland and 720,000 in Rumania according to the same censuses. In Hungary they were only recorded as a national group in the 1941 census, taken when south Slovakia, Ruthenia and north Transylvania formed part of Hungary. They were then recorded as 160,000, which seems a very low figure. Jews in Czechoslovakia in 1930 were recorded as 190,000, of whom the majority came from areas which in 1941 were in Hungary.

lived together for centuries and become inextricably interwoven. The most important example of this is Transylvania. For centuries the Hungarians ruled this province, and the Rumanians had no rights. In 1918 it was acquired by Rumania, and it was the turn of the Hungarians to be underdogs. For twenty years Transylvania was a bone of contention between Hungary and Rumania, whose relations with each other were continuously bad. Another example is Macedonia, the variety of whose population has given French cooks a word for fruit salad. It has been for fifty years a bone of contention between Serbia (or Yugoslavia), Bulgaria and Greece.

A further special problem was created in two states, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, where there was more than one 'state nation'—in the first case Czechs and Slovaks, and in the second Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In both cases one nation (the Czechs in Czechoslovakia and the Serbs in Yugoslavia) obtained control of the state machine and identified its own nationalism with 'national unity'. The problem was complicated by different cultural and administrative traditions. The Czechs were 'more western' than the Slovaks, while the Serbs were 'more oriental' than the Croats or Slovenes. Thus the Slovaks enjoyed better government under the Czechs than they had previously known, while for the Croats there was a decline in standards. But both Slovaks and Croats were strongly nationalist, and caused in fact far more trouble to the new states than did the national minorities in the strict sense.

Nationalism was deliberately used by Danubian governments as a means of diverting discontent from home problems. If the depressed peasants could be persuaded that their poverty was due, not to the failures of the government, but to the wickedness of a neighbouring nation, this could relieve the regime of dangers in internal politics. For instance, 'Revisionism'<sup>1</sup> was used by the Hungarian rulers to divert public attention from the question of a land reform. The Jews were a most convenient scapegoat in Poland, Rumania and Hungary. Despite their demagogic and

<sup>1</sup> 'Revisionism' meant revision of the treaty of Trianon (1920). This could mean one of three things—improved treatment for Hungarian minorities in neighbour states, frontier revision designed to restore to Hungary areas inhabited mainly by Hungarians and adjoining the frontiers of Hungary, and restoration of the 1914 frontiers. The first was in theory acceptable to the neighbour states. The second was officially refused, but was not utterly inconceivable. The third, which would have put millions of non-Hungarians back under Hungarian rule, was obviously unacceptable. The word 'revisionism' became a boggy-word to the publicists of the Little Entente countries and a mystic war-cry to those of Hungary.

pseudo-revolutionary character, the nationalist movements furthered the interests of social conservatism. In the late thirties they also became the tools of Nazi Germany. It is curious that those who most stridently declaimed their devotion to their nations' 'greatness', and who advanced the most extravagant nationalist claims with regard to their neighbours, all became the most subservient agents of German Imperialism.

It was clear already before the war that the only method of treatment for the disease of nationalism was to end the identification of nationality with the state apparatus. Each nation has a language and culture of its own, which requires respect, and as long as these are trampled on by another nation each will react with violence. Between the wars it was a dogma that nationality could only be protected by national states. This meant that every nation must have a state of its own, within whose frontiers all members of the nation are included and no other nation may have any rights. But Eastern Europe cannot be organised on this basis unless one nation succeeds in exterminating all the others, which with the existing balance of numerical and military strength is improbable. The only way out would seem to be a closer association of states, which would reduce the importance of frontiers. Within the states so associated, members of different national groups would have equal right to use their language in schools and administration and equal opportunities of recruitment into the civil service. This would in fact not weaken but strengthen the states.

Social reforms, by removing internal tensions, could help the chances of such a policy. No less essential is a minimum of international stability. If these two essential conditions were fulfilled, then at least a beginning could be made. Ultimate success must depend above all on the adoption of an entirely new educational policy, designed to encourage citizens from their earliest years to regard fellow-citizens of foreign speech, not as enemies but as friends.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PARTIES AND POLITICS

THE many political parties which existed in Eastern Europe before 1939 can be roughly divided into four types, which we will call bourgeois democratic, peasant, Marxist and fascist. The present chapter will contain a brief summary of the part played by the most important parties from these four categories. From the summary a general picture should emerge of the development of the East European countries from parliamentarism to dictatorship and should render possible some broad conclusions on that subject.

#### BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

These parties stood for western parliamentary democracy. They did not have a specifically class programme. Rather they sought by progressive general principles to appeal to all classes. They said much of political freedom and something of social reform. They received the votes of many peasants, small officials and factory workers, but their leaders were for the most part lawyers, business men or teachers from the towns. This became still more the case as the numerical and economic importance of the bourgeoisie increased. Their policies in practice favoured mainly the urban business class and the richer peasants. The economic difficulties of the thirties accentuated the conflict of interests between their leaders and the poor in both town and village. Rising social discontent alarmed them, and diminished their enthusiasm for even political democracy, since it might give power to the unprivileged to overrule their policy. They split into fractions, some of which joined the new dictatorships and abandoned all pretence of liberal principles, while others remained in ineffectual opposition, divided within themselves by personal quarrels and cut off from the majority of their peoples by their conservatism and inertia.

The most important party of this type in Poland were the National Democrats, who were led for more than thirty years by Roman Dmowski. This party to some extent stood for the traditions of the French Revolution but its nationalism was more

important than its liberalism. To some extent this was inevitable at a time when Poland's division between three empires was a bitter grievance to every Polish patriot. But Dmowski introduced a new and aggressive type of nationalism. In his famous book *Thoughts of a Modern Pole* (1893) he repudiated the old liberalism, and held up Bismarck's Prussia as a model to be followed by Poles. Prussian methods should be used to overthrow the hated Prussians. One of his close associates, Balicki, expressed similar views in a book significantly entitled *National Egoism*. Dmowski's nationalism was directed not only against the great oppressing nations, the Germans and Russians, but also against nations suffering from the same oppression but who were real or potential rivals of the Poles—the Ukrainians and the Jews. The National Democratic Party was closely linked with the rising Polish middle class, largely of aristocratic origin, which was entering the free professions and business. Polish business was increasingly linked to the great Russian market, and Dmowski therefore worked energetically though unsuccessfully for Polish-Russian co-operation within the framework of a 'neoslav' policy which was above all directed against Germany. At the same time the entry of Poles into business, hitherto largely a Jewish preserve, gave a powerful impetus to anti-semitism. After 1918 the National Democratic Party was the strongest in Poland. Pilsudski's *coup d'état* of 1926 threw it into opposition, where it remained until the Nazi conquest. During the thirties it was very much influenced by fascism. It became more and more anti-semitic, but its anti-German nationalism prevented most of its supporters from falling a prey to Nazi propaganda. On the eve of the war it was a reactionary and chauvinistic party, led by the professional and business class, but possessing wide popular support largely through the influence of the Catholic Church.

The Czech National Democratic Party resembled the Polish in its nationalism and in the social character of its leadership. It was however less linked with the Catholic Church, and it had much less popular support after 1918. Its leader Kramář was an old friend of Dmowski, and was with him prominent in the neoslav movement before 1914. The party was socially conservative, and was backed mainly by business men and senior bureaucrats. In the thirties it lost much ground among these classes to the advantage of the Agrarian Party. The other bourgeois democratic party among the Czechs was the National Socialist Party. Its most distinguished member was Dr. Eduard Beneš, but his constant

tenure of the Foreign Ministry or the Presidency prevented him from playing a role in party politics. The party was socially radical and strongly nationalist. Because of the former association of the Catholic Church with the Austrian imperial dynasty and ruling class, and because of a patriotic glorification of the Hussite tradition, the National Socialists tended towards anti-clericalism. In many ways they can be compared, in outlook and policy, with the French Radical Party. Their main strength was among the professional class and state officials, but they also enjoyed considerable working-class support.

Hungary hardly had an important party of the bourgeois democratic type. For lack of a better description one must however include under this title the 'government party', which under various names dominated Hungarian politics from 1920 to 1944. Its essential basis was the landed gentry and the Hungarian middle class. The latter consisted mainly of bureaucrats and professional men of aristocratic origin, but from the thirties onwards the purely Hungarian business element began to be important. The non-Hungarian (mainly Jewish) business class supported the government party, but had little direct influence in it. Hungarian politics were very largely a personal affair. The leaders depended on the support of the Regent, Admiral Horthy. Local party bosses obtained their positions, and rose in the party hierarchy, mainly by personal connections with influential men. From 1921 to 1931 the government party and the country were dominated by Count Stephen Bethlen, a member of a famous Transylvanian aristocratic family, a social conservative with elements of whiggish liberalism. After 1933 the dominant personality was General Gömbös, a middle-class man of German origin, who inclined rather more to a fascist style of demagogy, but still did not carry things to an extreme. Under his successors, especially the banker Imrédy (Premier 1938-9), the fascist trend within the party grew. The Churches (Catholic, Calvinist and Evangelical) usually had some influence within the party. Mildly liberal elements remained within it to the end. It is difficult to generalise about so heterogeneous a group, but it is probably true that with the passage of time the landowning gentry lost some power within it to the advantage of the rising middle class, itself largely of gentry origin, and that it thus began to pay more attention to the interests of industry and less to those of agriculture. But when agricultural questions arose it defended the landowners at the expense of the smallholders or labourers.

The dominant Rumanian party was the National Liberal, which represented the middle class in business, the professions and the bureaucracy. The party is inextricably associated with the family of Brătianu, above all with the father and son, Ion and Ionel, who were many times Prime Minister between 1880 and 1927. Before 1914 the liberals alternated with the conservatives, representing the landowners. But land reform and universal suffrage, both introduced by the liberals during the war, deprived the landowners of economic and political power, and thus destroyed the Conservative Party. In the ten years after 1918 the great majority of the wealthier people in town and country, and the bulk of the civil service and business (including Jewish business), supported the liberals in the old kingdom of Rumania. But in the new province of Transylvania the main political force was the National Party, founded under the Hungarian regime. Its support came from the peasants, but its leaders were middle class—small-town lawyers, school teachers and merchants. It might have been expected that these two parties would merge after 1918 and form a united bourgeois democratic party of Greater Rumania. That this did not happen was due partly to the clash of two powerful personalities, the two leaders, Ionel Brătianu and Iuliu Maniu, for whom there was not room within one party, and partly to the desire of the business elements within the Liberal Party to get their hands on the considerable economic resources of Transylvania, including the new industries which the Hungarians had encouraged since the end of the nineteenth century. Consequently the liberals remained a party of the old kingdom. They stood for rigid centralism, both administrative and economic, and also for economic nationalism. They were especially hostile to foreign capital. Their great days ended with the death of Ionel Brătianu in 1927. They were out of office until 1933. They then returned for four years, but were only a shadow of their former selves. Their main leader was now Tătărescu, who became a willing instrument of King Carol II's plans for a personal dictatorship. The liberals were now a thoroughly reactionary party, dominated by big industrialists (especially from the new heavy industry which made quick progress in the thirties), and tolerating the growth of fascist movements. After the establishment of a royal dictatorship in 1938 the liberals split up into little cliques.

The corresponding party in Yugoslavia was the Serbian Radical Party. The founders of the party in the seventies were utopian

socialists, pupils of the Russian writer Chernyshevski. During the eighties the socialist elements in their programme disappeared, and they became a militant peasant party fighting for political democracy as understood in the West. They had to fight the despotic Prince Milan and the Progressive Party, which was based on the top bureaucrats, professional army officers and merchants, and pursued a policy of modernisation by the introduction of capitalism, making the peasants pay. The radicals led a peasant revolt in 1883, which was suppressed with some bloodshed. In the next twenty years they were occasionally in the government, but the opposition of the Crown prevented them from exercising real power. Only with the overthrow of the Obrenović dynasty in 1903 and the accession of a constitutional monarch, King Peter I Karadjordjević, did they have their chance. Now they had become the 'party of power', and they remained in that happy position for some thirty years. Pašić, their leader, who had started as a revolutionary, became a respectable and fanatically nationalist politician. The party attracted to itself all the business and bureaucratic elements which had previously supported its rivals the Progressives.

By 1914 Serbia already had the beginnings of a capitalist class, and with the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 this class's chances of new wealth enormously increased. The Serb-Croat struggle, which began with the controversy between centralism and federalism at the Constituent Assembly of 1921 and which poisoned Yugoslav politics for more than twenty years, was to a considerable extent due to the rivalry between the capitalist classes of Belgrade and Zagreb. The former now controlled the Radical Party, and used the state power to further their interests at the expense of their Croat rivals. That they were not always successful in no way diminished Croatian resentment. After the death of Pašić in 1926 the party was led by lesser men. When King Alexander introduced a dictatorship in 1929, it was largely from the ranks of the Radical Party that he chose his collaborators. Thus, even though the radicals, like other parties, were unable to carry on strictly party activities, they were still relatively privileged. The social elements which controlled the Radical Party were also favoured by the dictatorship. After Alexander's assassination, his successor Prince Regent Paul also relied on the radicals. Milan Stojadinović, Premier from 1935 to 1939, was a radical. He created a new party, the Yugoslav Radical Union, which combined the radicals with the Slovene Catholics and the Yugoslav Moslem organisation.

The last two groups controlled Slovenia and Bosnia, but in the rest of the country the radicals were supreme. This policy was not accepted by the whole party. The remaining genuine democrats broke away, and collaborated with the opposition parties. But by now the radicals were, like the Rumanian liberals, a shadow of their former selves. Stojadinović modelled himself increasingly and openly on Italian fascism, while the radical opposition was weak and badly led.

Another Serbian bourgeois party worth mentioning is the Democrat Party. This was derived from the Independent Radicals, who had broken away from the main party after 1903, and from the Serb democrats of the formerly Hungarian provinces. In the 1921 elections it won the second largest number of seats after the Radicals. The Democrat Party's programme hardly differed from that of the Radical. On the whole it was more genuinely democratic, and was based more on the small officials and professional class, and less on business, than its more successful rival.

The Bulgarian bourgeois democratic parties were already rather weak by the end of the First World War. After Bulgaria's liberation in 1878 the main struggle was between the conservatives and the liberals, corresponding approximately to the progressives and the radicals in Serbia at the same time. From the Liberal Party had broken off the more progressive Radical Party. All these had been more or less left behind by the tide of politics in the following years. More important was the Democratic Party led by Malinov, which was strong before 1914 and continued to play a part in the post-war years. It was, like other similar parties, led by professional men and supported by peasants. After the war the Peasant Party and the communists dominated the scene. When the Peasant Party was violently overthrown in 1923, a 'Democratic bloc' was created of bourgeois politicians, but behind this respectable façade a regime of force existed. Only in 1931 a more or less democratic regime was revived, and for three years the Democrats, under Malinov and his successor Mushanov, were the strongest party. In 1934 a military *coup d'état* overthrew parliamentary government, and this was succeeded by a royal dictatorship which was still in power when Bulgaria was drawn into the war on the side of the Axis.

Greek politics were dominated by two bourgeois democratic parties, Liberals and Populists, commonly known as Republicans<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There were republicans who were not liberals, and royalists who were not populists, but no royalists were liberals and no republicans were populists.

and Royalists. More even than in the other East European countries, personal issues were supreme. The Liberal Party was based on the personality of Venizelos, who was not only a great national leader, but also a social reformer, and introduced a land reform and other important measures before 1914. But the issue of the monarchy soon bedevilled Greek politics. For twenty years all other issues were relatively ignored. In 1916 King Constantine was pro-German while Venizelos was for the Entente. Entente military intervention decided the issue, but created great resentment among a large part of the population. After the war against Germany was over, but while Greece was engaged in her own war with the Turks in Asia Minor, Constantine was restored. But the decisive defeat of the Greek forces by Kemal Atatürk in 1922 made him unpopular. Two colonels, Plastiras and Gonatas, led a revolt which deposed him and executed six prominent royalist politicians. Venizelists, royalists and military dictators succeeded each other in the following years without much violence. In 1935 the Venizelists unsuccessfully revolted against a royalist government. Some months later monarchy was restored in the person of King George II. For a year the king attempted to rule constitutionally, and insisted on a generous amnesty. But in August 1936 he gave dictatorial powers to General Metaxas, who introduced a regime deliberately modelled on fascism. It was still in power when war began.

Throughout these years the energies of the two main parties had been concentrated on the monarchy-republic controversy. Liberals had been devoted to the person of Venizelos, populists to the person of the King. Both parties included business men, bureaucrats, peasants and some workers. Both attempted when in power to purge the bureaucracy and the army officer corps of supporters of their rivals. In this the royalists were the more successful as their last purge followed the 1935 rising and the republicans had no chance to get their own back before the heavy hand of Metaxas descended. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two parties was regional. The stronghold of the populists was the Peloponnese, an agricultural region in which political loyalties are still to some extent decided by individual local notables or families. Peloponnesians have long been disproportionately numerous in the bureaucracy in all parts of Greece. The personal stronghold of Venizelos was his own home land, Crete, but the republicans were also strong in Macedonia and Thrace, the new lands won by Venizelos's successful foreign

policy, in which moreover a large number of refugees from Asia Minor were settled. It is probably also true that the republicans had more support than their rivals among the very important ship-owning and commercial class, while the royalists were stronger among the remaining land-owning families. But differences of principle are not easy to find. It is hardly an exaggeration that while two factions of the Greek bourgeoisie wrangled for power, the Greek peasants and workers grew poorer and were ignored. And Greece's economic troubles, similar to those of other Balkan countries, were much aggravated by the burden of settling more than a million Asia Minor refugees in an already overpopulated country.

It is convenient at this point to mention the parties closely associated with the Catholic Church. They do not exactly fit either of the categories of 'bourgeois-democratic' or 'peasant' parties though possessing some of the features of each. The two most important are the People's Parties of Slovenia and Slovakia.

The Slovene party was in a sense a peasant party, but it was never intended to be a class party, and in its leadership Catholic priests played a very important part. In particular, priests had organised the efficient co-operative movement, which was of real benefit to smallholders as well as to more prosperous peasants. The party was strongly nationalist. Its main enemies were Germans and Italians. Under Austrian rule it had both resisted germanising pressure and fiercely opposed the Italian claims to territory inhabited by Slovenes. When after 1918 this territory was given to Italy, the Slovene party remained irridentist, though it did not always talk loudly about it. In its relations with Belgrade, it stood for autonomy, but it did not press its claims. The Slovenes, having a language of their own, enjoyed the substance of autonomy, and being better educated and more efficient than other Yugoslavs, obtained a share of the better posts in the whole country much larger than their numbers warranted. Between the wars the Slovene bourgeoisie became wealthier and more numerous. The party leadership thus became increasingly bourgeois though the masses remained peasants. At the same time the trend of political Catholicism was, as in Austria under Dollfuss, towards fascism. Mgr. Anton Korošec, the party's leader, had started as a democrat but by 1939 was much more like a fascist. As Minister of the Interior in Belgrade he was in charge of repression all over the country, and used his powers ruthlessly. Thus the Slovene People's Party was partly bourgeois, partly peasant and partly

fascist, was always strongly clerical and nationalist, and to the end also contained some genuinely democratic elements.

The Slovak People's Party resembles the Slovene in many ways. The vast majority of its supporters were peasants, its leaders came largely from the priesthood, its ideology was always strongly Catholic, and it was extremely nationalist. Its leader, Fr. Hlinka, began as a national leader against the Hungarian government. When his country became part of Czechoslovakia he became anti-Czech, while not ceasing to be anti-Hungarian. His hostility was due not only to the centralism of the Czechs, who would not give Slovakia the autonomy he demanded, but also to the liberal and nationalist outlook of the Czech educated class, which in effect ruled the whole Republic. Nationalism and anti-liberalism naturally inclined the Slovak People's Party leaders towards fascism. When in 1938-9 they obtained first autonomy and then independence by the favour of Hitler and Mussolini, the fascist elements in the party definitely prevailed. Independent Slovakia was a fascist state, with one party and with armed party formations based on the Blackshirts or S.S. Mgr. Tiso, the successor of Hlinka (who had died in 1937), had perhaps some reservations with regard to fascist ideology, at any rate where Nazism conflicted with Catholic doctrine, but his most extreme followers had no inhibitions. During the twenty years of Czechoslovakia, a Slovak urban bourgeoisie had developed. Part of it, especially members of the Protestant fifth of the population, were closely linked with the Czechs, but the anti-Czech majority of the bourgeoisie strongly supported the People's Party and won increasing influence.

Two more Catholic parties deserve brief mention. These are the Christian Labour Party in Poland, and the Czech People's Party. The first was strong in Silesia, where it enjoyed support from Catholic factory workers. The second was supported by the peasants in Moravia. Both these parties were democratic in outlook. Neither had great influence between the world wars.

#### PEASANT PARTIES

As, with the single exception of the Czech lands, peasants formed a majority of the population throughout Eastern Europe, it was logical to expect that parties created and led by peasants, to defend the interests of peasants, would play a big part in the democratic system which the victory of the Allies in 1918 was to bring about in Eastern Europe. Peasant parties, organised on a

class basis and with a class programme, appeared in the post-war years, but the hopes placed in them were disappointed. Perhaps the main reason lies in the physical dispersion of peasants in small villages and settlements, which makes their organisation into a compact force much more difficult than that of either bourgeois or factory workers. In parliamentary politics peasants felt out of place. Inevitably the leadership of their parties was assumed by people who had the right education and experience for political debates and journalism—lawyers, teachers and writers. The peasant parties were always confused in their attitude to industry and the towns. They realised the need for industry as an outlet for the surplus rural population, but they clung to romantic ideas about the 'moral superiority' of the country over the town. Often, instead of co-operating with the town workers against big business and bureaucracy, they allowed themselves to be used by the ruling class against the workers. 'Anti-town' demagoguery usually worked out to the advantage of the rulers. Another fault was the failure to admit divergencies of interest within the peasantry—between large and small farmers, and between grain-producing and pastoral regions. Finally, nationalism increasingly took the place of the fight for social justice in the speeches and programmes of their leaders, and this became more so as bourgeois elements gained control.

The Polish peasant movement developed differently under Russian and Austrian rule. In Austrian Galicia, under the leadership of Witos, it had become an important force before 1914. It was a moderate democratic party, demanding more government assistance to small farmers. In Russian Poland the influence of the Russian agrarian socialist movement, and the more oppressive form of government, gave the peasant movements a more revolutionary character. In united Poland after 1918 there were several different peasant parties, of which the most important were 'Piast' from Galicia, and 'Liberation' from ex-Russian territory. The various groups co-operated for a time in Parliament, but they soon disagreed again. It was not till the Pilsudski dictatorship began to resort to severe repression after 1930 that they were driven together. In 1931 a united peasant movement was formed under the title People's Party. In the thirties radical views grew among the peasants, especially in Galicia, where overpopulation was particularly serious. The slowing up of the land reform and the increased disparity between the prices of farm produce and manufactured goods were special grievances to the

Polish peasants. In August 1937 there was a peasant strike, a refusal to bring their goods to the towns. It led to disorders and brutal armed suppression. On the eve of the Second World War, the Polish peasant movement had more support, and was in a more radical mood, than twenty years previously.

The Czech Agrarian Party was not a purely peasant party. The contrast between town and country was less striking in the Czech lands than anywhere in Eastern Europe. The peasants were more efficient, better educated and equipped, and enjoyed a much higher standard of living. Their outlook was much closer to that of the bourgeoisie. The large and efficient Czech bourgeoisie had for fifty years before 1914 grown largely from the peasantry. The biggest Czech bank, Živnostenska Banka, had begun as a savings bank for small bourgeois and peasants, but by the 1920's it had become a great capitalist concern. The links between Czech peasants, small bourgeois and big business men were close: each category merged imperceptibly into the next. The growth of a Czech capitalist class was also furthered by the necessity of surpassing the established German-Austrian business class of Bohemia. One result of this social process was that the Agrarian Party became dominated by business men. It became the party of Czech capital, replacing in that role the National Democratic Party of Kramář, whose political ideas were less and less acceptable to most Czechs. The Agrarian Party tried to attract Slovak peasants as well as Czech. But the Slovak peasants were at a very different economic and cultural level from the Czech. They were a proletarian peasantry rather than a bourgeois peasantry. They were poor, ignorant, technically backward, and suffered from increasing pressure of population on the land. They were also under the influence of their priests. Most followed the nationalist semi-fascist Slovak People's Party. Many of the leaders of the Slovak Agrarians were recruited from the important Protestant minority. The Slovak Protestants were both more prosperous and better educated than the Catholics. Their outlook was nearer that of the Czechs. Thus in both the Czech lands and Slovakia the Agrarian Party was only partly a peasant party. But it was the strongest party in the country, took part in almost every coalition, and was continuously in power from 1922 onwards, under Švehla, the most skilful parliamentary tactician of the Republic, and then under Hodža, a Slovak Protestant who had been a member of the Hungarian Parliament before 1914. The agrarians were strongly entrenched in the administration, and

were able to give valuable patronage to ambitious persons seeking a career. The party became complacent and rather reactionary.

The Hungarian Small Farmers' Party was also a mixed party. It was based on the not very large class of medium peasants, and made little appeal to the 3,000,000 dwarf holders and labourers. It stood for land reform, but a moderate and gradual reform. In the twenties under Gaszton Gál it had a substantial following, and provided some opposition to the Bethlen regime. In the thirties it fell off. On the eve of war it was led by a rather conservative member of the gentry, Tibor Eckhardt. It attracted liberal elements from the middle class of Budapest, and continued to defend political democracy at a time when fascism was gaining ground both in and outside the government party. But it never co-operated closely with the socialists, and its leaders were in general more interested in foreign policy—in which they favoured the Western Powers in opposition to the regime's increasing dependence on the Axis—than in social problems.

The Rumanian Peasant Party was founded after the war by a school teacher, Ion Mihalache. Before 1914 agrarian socialist ideas of the Russian type had had a big influence on a section of the Rumanian intelligentsia. The peasant revolt of 1907, bloodily suppressed by the authorities, had directed attention to the social problems of the peasantry. But it was only after universal suffrage had been brought in, and a land reform had been decided, that an organised peasant movement came into being. In its first years its radicalism caused alarm to the Rumanian ruling class and dominant parties. But in 1926 the Peasant Party fused with the Transylvanian National Party, led by Iuliu Maniu, which for reasons explained above had not been able to come to terms with the liberals, the party which in structure and outlook most corresponded to it. Thereby the Peasant Party gained parliamentary strength, but lost much of its driving force. It now became a curious mixture of Transylvanian regionalists and peasant radicals. Superior education and parliamentary skill, acquired in the hard school of pre-1914 Budapest, soon gave the Transylvanians leadership of the party. Both wings of the party sincerely believed in political democracy, but their social ideas differed widely. After the National Peasant Party (as it was called after 1926) came to power in 1928, it received support from business men in both halves of the country. Its abandonment of the liberals' strict economic nationalism created bonds between it and foreign capital, now admitted into Rumania on a much more

generous scale. This further strengthened the bourgeois elements within it at the expense of the peasants. Its period of office was a disappointment to the peasants. It coincided with the slump, and brought no major reforms. The party was weakened by the personal quarrel between its leader Maniu and King Carol II, who was able to create cliques and splits within its ranks.

The Croatian Peasant Party, founded at the beginning of the century by the brothers Ante and Stepan Radić, won a sweeping victory in Croatia when the creation of Yugoslavia brought universal suffrage. The Radić brothers held radical views. Their original policy was a class policy. The peasants, being the majority of the people, should rule, and should oust the landlords and bourgeois who hitherto had monopolised power. They were also for co-operation with the workers and for the brotherhood of all Slav, and especially all South Slav, nations. But the new Yugoslavia was not a federation of equal Slav nations: it was a centralist state controlled by a Serbian party, the radicals, who ruled in the interest of the Serbian bourgeoisie against all classes of the Croatian nation. Thus the Belgrade governments incurred the enmity not only of the Croatian peasants on social grounds but also of the Croatian business and middle class on national grounds. And as the Croatian Peasant Party was by far the strongest party in Croatia, Croatian business men and intellectuals, instead of setting up small parties of their own, entered the Peasant Party. And as the national issue, which became simplified into one of 'Croats against Serbs', overshadowed all else, leadership within the Peasant Party passed from peasant into middle-class hands. Ante Radić had died before the war, and Stepan was fatally wounded by a shot on the floor of the Belgrade parliament in 1928. His successor, Maček, a lawyer, enjoyed great popularity among all classes, but his most important advisers were from the urban middle class. In the late thirties the party had a pro-fascist right wing and a radical left wing, while the centre stood for a somewhat vague peasant democracy. The influence of the Catholic Church in the party was growing, and favoured the right.

The Serbian Agrarian Party was less important. It was formed after the creation of Yugoslavia from various groups in Serbia, Bosnia and Voivodina (formerly southern Hungary). It was fairly successful in the 1921 elections, but then split and lost ground. It became in fact a third Serbian democratic party, led by similar people, and appealing to the same types of electors, as the

radicals and the democrats, but weaker than either of them. A left wing led by Dragoljub Jovanović, an intelligent and courageous university professor, pleaded for radical social reforms and laid special stress on the need for real friendship between Serbian and Croatian peasants.

The Bulgarian Agrarian Union was the most impressive of the East European peasant parties. Like the Polish party, it was a class party, and its outlook was radical. It had in Alexander Stamboliiski a great leader. He was Prime Minister from 1919 to 1923. His policy consisted in transferring power from the business-bureaucratic ruling class to the peasants. He made many enemies, and some of his close collaborators were crude, ignorant and intolerant. There was too much anti-town demagogy and too little co-operation with the industrial workers. But for the latter the workers' leaders were as much to blame as the peasants'. Stamboliiski antagonised Bulgarian nationalists, and the powerful Macedonian émigré organisation, by his policy of reconciliation with Yugoslavia, and unfortunately received little sympathy from Belgrade. In June 1923 his government was overthrown by a conspiracy of old politicians and army officers, and he was murdered. In the following years the party was persecuted, and splits occurred. In the democrat Malinov's government of 1931 the moderate wing of the agrarians, led by Gichev, took part in a coalition. Under the dictatorship after 1934 all parties were banned, but the agrarians still had a large following in the country. Apart from Gichev's group there was a left wing, known from the name of its newspaper as 'Pladne', whose most important leader was Dr. G. M. Dimitrov.

#### MARXIST PARTIES

The most industrialised country of Eastern Europe is Czechoslovakia. Poland and Hungary also have old-established industrial centres (Silesia, Łódź, Warsaw and Budapest). In these three countries, therefore, the essential basis for a socialist movement, a working class quite distinct from the peasantry, but receiving a flow of recruits from the peasantry, existed. For this reason the socialist movement was strong in all three countries, and had a real mass basis. In the south-eastern countries industry has grown up since 1918 from comparatively small beginnings. The working class is newer and less clearly defined. Here socialism has started as an intellectual movement, from the educated class, and only later has acquired a mass basis. It is no coincidence that it is in

the countries of the second type that communism, not being seriously threatened by a powerful socialist workers' movement, has had most success.

The Polish socialist movement goes back to the eighties, but its history formally begins with the foundation, by a congress of exiles in Paris in 1892, of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.).<sup>1</sup> Its main strength was always in Russian Poland, where it had to operate illegally until 1905 and again after 1907. In Austrian Galicia a legal movement was possible, and a Polish Social Democratic Party was founded, nominally separate from the party in Russian-occupied Poland but in fact closely co-ordinated with it. In Prussian-occupied Poland socialism was not strong, but, such as it was, it too kept contact with P.P.S. After 1905 P.P.S. in Russia split into two groups, 'the Left' and the 'revolutionary fraction'. The first aimed not at complete independence for Poland but at wide autonomy within a Russian republic, and meanwhile favoured co-operation with the Russian socialist movement. The second insisted on complete independence for Poland, and was sceptical of the value of co-operation with any Russians, socialist or otherwise. Among the leaders of the 'revolutionary fraction' was Pilsudski, later dictator of Poland. The failure of the 1905 revolution in Russia, followed by the oppressive nationalist policy of Stolypin (Premier 1906-11), seemed to justify Pilsudski's view, and the P.P.S. Left lost ground in the following years. To complete the picture, since 1900 there had existed yet another organisation, 'Social Democracy of Poland and Lithuania' (S.D.K.P.L.), led by Rosa Luxemburg. It was opposed not only to Polish independence but to Polish autonomy. It argued that the economic interests of the Polish lands were bound up with those of the three empires to which they belonged. The partition of Poland should be preserved. Russian Poland should become an integral part of a centralised Russian socialist republic.

Under the liberated Polish Republic two socialist parties emerged. P.P.S. Left and S.D.K.P.L. united in December 1918 to form the Communist Party of Poland. The remaining groups from all three sections of Poland combined at a congress in Cracow in 1919 to form one united P.P.S. In the winter of 1918-19 the Polish communists were fairly strong in the Workers' Councils

<sup>1</sup> For a general account of political movements in Poland up to 1914, see Feldman, *Geschichte der politischen Ideen in Polen*. A brief account of the history of the socialist movement, from a non-communist point of view, is Jablonski, *P.P.S. za wolność i lud*, 1945.

which were set up, on the Russian and German models, in Polish industrial centres. But except in the Dombrowa basin they were everywhere weaker than the socialists.<sup>1</sup> The indifference of the peasants, hostility of the bourgeoisie, and the anti-Russian nationalism of all classes prevented the communists from making themselves a great force. The Polish-Soviet war of 1920 did not help them. From time to time in the twenties and early thirties they gained ground in municipal elections at the expense of the socialists, but they never seem to have made headway among the peasants. In the thirties the Polish communists fell a prey to factionalism. Their main leaders were in exile in the Soviet Union, and were implicated in the great purges of the thirties. Consequently the Comintern decided in 1938 to dissolve the party. P.P.S. on the other hand was throughout Poland's twenty years of independence a powerful force. It had the support of the great majority of the rapidly increasing working class. After misguidedly supporting Pilsudski's *coup d'état* in 1926, the socialists soon found themselves in opposition to the regime. Despite persecution they held their own. The trade union movement, which they controlled, grew in strength. In 1936-8 a series of great strikes was organised, some of the 'sit-in' type. P.P.S. also established friendly relations with the Peasant Party. On the eve of the war it was clear that in conditions of political freedom these two parties would have had a majority of the people.

Czech social democracy began as a part of the Austrian party, founded by Viktor Adler in 1889. At the end of the nineties, however, the Czech party organised itself separately, though collaborating very closely with the Austrians. Before the First World War there were two points of view on the national question, as in Poland. Some Czech socialists wished for national independence, others hoped for a great Austrian socialist republic, within which the Czech and other nations would enjoy autonomy. The leader of the second tendency was Šmeral, who in internal political issues did not belong to the more revolutionary but to the more moderate wing of the party. National independence was welcomed by the Czech workers, but it was followed by a growth of social conflicts. Šmeral profited from this to put himself at the head of the left wing of Czech socialism, won the confidence of Moscow, and became the leader of the Czech Communist Party. The formal split came in 1921. For the first few years the communists had a bigger following than the social democrats. In the thirties the

<sup>1</sup> See *Voprosy Istorii*, loc. cit.

socialists regained ground, and on the eve of Munich the two workers' parties had about equal strength.

The Hungarian Social Democrat Party was founded in 1890. By 1914 it had a strong following among the Budapest workers and some branches in the mining and industrial areas of the provinces. Trade unions were beginning to be a force, despite legal obstacles and official repression of strikes.<sup>1</sup> But the restricted franchise kept the socialists out of parliament. The revolution of 1918 gave power to the workers, but leadership soon passed to the extreme left, which formed the Hungarian Communist Party. Prominent among its leaders were former prisoners-of-war in Russia, who had been indoctrinated by the Bolsheviks before returning home. In March 1919 the radical democratic government of Count Károlyi resigned, and the communist Béla Kun seized power and proclaimed a Soviet Republic. He was overthrown in August after the Rumanian army had entered Budapest. There followed a 'white' counter-revolution and terror, which gave way in 1921 to the more respectable semi-dictatorship of the conservative landowner Count Bethlen. The Hungarian Communist Party did not recover from the 1919 disaster. Its leaders mostly escaped, and devoted their energies to bitter factional and doctrinal disputes in exile. Underground activities were crushed by the police. In 1924 Rákosi, a former member of Kun's government, illegally returned to Hungary but was arrested. He was condemned to death but the sentence was later commuted. He spent sixteen years in prison before being exchanged in 1940 for Hungarian flags captured by the Russians in 1849. The Social Democrat Party continued to exist. After the white terror had spent its force, Bethlen tolerated the socialists. They had their trade unions, press and party organisations, and were allowed to make propaganda among the workers, but were obliged to ignore the peasants, including the agricultural labourers. In the thirties the membership of the Socialist Party was mostly more radical than its leaders. The caution of the latter at least permitted the creation of a solid working-class organisation. On the eve of the war there was little sign of any separate communist organisation. Those who would in free conditions have supported communism worked within the Socialist Party, its youth movement and its trade unions, trying to push the party into a more radical policy.

<sup>1</sup> The development of the Hungarian working-class movement before 1914 is described in Rézler. *A magyar nagyipari munkásság kialakulása.*

A Rumanian Socialist Party was founded in 1893, but by 1900 it had disintegrated.<sup>1</sup> Its leaders were intellectuals, and it had no mass basis. In 1910 a new party was founded which attempted not merely to proclaim socialist ideas but to organise the incipient working class. Its main leader was Rakovsky, a Rumanian subject of Bulgarian extraction who was later to play a part in the Bolshevik Party in Russia and to hold high posts under the Soviet regime until he was 'unmasked' at the Moscow treason trials. In 1915 the Rumanian socialists organised a conference in Bucarest of Balkan socialist parties, attended by delegates from Bulgaria and Greece, but not from Serbia. After the war the usual split between socialists and communists occurred. The Communist Party of Rumania was not formally created until 1920. It started with a majority of the socialist movement. It was fiercely repressed, and was made formally illegal from 1924 onwards. The socialists were tolerated by Rumanian governments, but were to a large extent compromised in the eyes of the workers by their co-operation with the regimes, even with Carol II's dictatorship. On the other hand it is hard to see what they could have done in the circumstances but fight a rearguard action in defence of the few crumbs of liberty that the regime allowed. The working class did not become an important part of the population until the development of heavy industry in the thirties, and by that time Rumania was well on the way to becoming a fascist state. The workers in the new industries had had no experience of the early labour movement, and had no chance to learn Marxist ideas. They had concrete economic reasons for discontent but no clearly defined political outlook. The small underground communist organisations recruited some devoted and heroic fighters, who played a leading part in a few big strikes, for instance in the Grivitsa railway workshops in Bucarest in 1933. But communist influence was not great, and the party was still further weakened in public esteem by the fact that many of its most active people belonged to national minority groups—Hungarians, Bulgarians and Jews. The non-political and discontented workers were, however, more promising material for extremists than for moderate socialists.

The Serbian Socialist Party was founded in 1903. Within its ranks there was always a struggle between reformists and pure

<sup>1</sup> See Petrescu, *Istoria socialismului în România*. The pioneer of the Rumanian movement was Dobrogeanu-Gherea, who under his original name of Katz began his political career in the 'Populist' movement in the seventies in Russia. See Aptekman, *Obshchestvo Zemlya i Volya* (Moscow 1920).

Marxists. The latter tendency prevailed, under the leadership of Tucović, a brilliant theorist and organiser who was killed in action in September 1914.<sup>1</sup> In Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia weak socialist organisations existed. In 1919 all united in a single party, in which the extreme left predominated. The party joined the Third International and became the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. For two years there was a series of strikes and local disorders, for some of which the communists were responsible and for most of which they were blamed. In the elections of 1921 they were the third strongest party. The assassination of the Minister of the Interior in the same year provided an excuse for the dissolution of the party. In subsequent years it was not only cruelly persecuted, but lost ground among the population. Most of the discontent which in 1919–21 had gone to support it now went to the various non-Serbian nationalist movements. Communism was, however, a force among the young intelligentsia, especially students and graduates of Belgrade university, and in the Popular Front period after 1935 it recovered much popularity. At the same time the party's underground organisation, which was bitterly denounced for various doctrinal and organisational errors in Comintern congresses in the twenties, seems to have been improved after 1937 by Joseph Broz (Tito), who was made Secretary-General for the purpose of clearing up heresy and 'fractionalism'.<sup>2</sup> On the eve of war it was a small but well-disciplined party, enjoying a measure of sympathy in wider circles. Moderate socialism on the other hand was extremely weak, and largely discredited by the contacts of some of its leaders with the dictatorship. Its only real strength lay in Slovenia, where something was left of the tradition of Austrian social democracy.

The division between reformism and pure Marxism had also been important from the beginning in the Bulgarian socialist movement. The Bulgarian party was founded in 1891. Its pioneer was Dimiter Blagoev, who had organised in 1885 in St. Petersburg the first known Marxist group inside Russia. Blagoev remained in touch with Russian socialism all his life. He stood for a highly centralised and disciplined elite party, considering Marxist quality more important than mere numbers of adherents. In this he resembled Lenin, though it is a mistake to treat his followers as

<sup>1</sup> See Wendel, *Aus der Welt der Südslawen*, pp. 200–5, 211–21. Also Lapčević, *Istorija socializma u Srbiji* (1926). The present view of Tucović held by Yugoslav communists is expressed in an article by Lazar Stefanović in *Komunist*, issue of November 1949.

<sup>2</sup> For the present Yugoslav communist view of the party's earlier history, see Tito, Report to the 5th Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party, July 1948.

simple Bulgarian reproductions of the Russian Bolsheviks.<sup>1</sup> It is an interesting coincidence that the first formal split in the Bulgarian movement—between the 'Narrow' faction of Blagoev and the 'Broad' faction which followed the usual Second International model—took place in 1903, the year of the division of Russian social democracy into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Up to the war the 'Broad' socialists had a larger popular following than the 'Narrow', but by 1918 war-weariness and the prestige of the Russian revolution combined to favour the latter. In 1919 the 'Narrow' became the Communist Party of Bulgaria, and at the elections of that year had 25 per cent of the poll and four times as many seats as the Social Democrats. During the four years of Stamboliiski's government the workers' organisations were freer than ever before, but the relations of peasants and workers were confused on both sides. When the counter-revolution overthrew Stamboliiski, the communists declared themselves 'neutral' on the ground that the 'quarrel of the urban and the rural bourgeoisie' did not interest them. Soon afterwards they admitted their error, and made an agreement with the battered agrarians for common action. The result was a communist-led insurrection in September 1923, which was bloodily suppressed. Further atrocities followed an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the king in Sofia cathedral in 1925. Under the Democrat Party government (1931-4) they enjoyed more freedom in a reorganised form under the title of 'Labour Party', but under King Boris's dictatorship from 1935 persecution was once more fierce. But throughout these years a hard core of illegal communist organisation was maintained in Sofia and other industrial centres, and the Popular Front policy increased public sympathy. Like the Yugoslav, the Bulgarian party on the eve of war was potentially a strong force.

The Greek socialist movement was extremely small before 1914. In 1918 a revolutionary Socialist Party was formed, which joined the Comintern and later became the Communist Party of Greece. The violently nationalist atmosphere of the years of war in Asia Minor was not favourable to its growth. Only in the thirties did a serious labour movement grow up in the industrial centres of Peiraeus, Salonica and Kavalla. The latter as the centre of the tobacco industry was particularly important. In the labour movement communist influence was much stronger than moderate socialist. In the 1935 parliament the communists had fifteen

<sup>1</sup> See Dimitrov, Report to the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, December 1948, for the Stalinist view of the 'Narrow Socialists'.

seats. Owing to the almost exactly equal strength of the much larger republican and royalist blocks the communists had great bargaining power. Fear of communist strength was the reason, or excuse, for Metaxas to set up in 1936 his dictatorship, under which of course communists were fiercely repressed. On the eve of war, though not numerous, they were potentially important. They had some organised working-class support, and enjoyed sympathy among part of the intelligentsia. Perhaps more important still, they knew what they wanted, and had their answers to the pressing social problems which the old parties, absorbed in ancient controversies, ignored. The communists could hope to exploit the desire of the Greek common man for a new deal.

#### FASCIST PARTIES

Fascist movements can be divided into two types—the official and the demagogic. The first type was practised by reactionary governments who aped Mussolini or Hitler, partly to ingratiate themselves with those gentlemen and partly because they vaguely felt that fascism was ‘the up-to-date thing’. They were really only fitting out their old reactionary regimes in new trappings: they had no intention of transforming them into totalitarian states. The second type was the mass movement led by fanatics who really believed in the fascist cause, who wished to sweep away the old abuses, drown the old rulers in blood and introduce the racialist totalitarian new order.

In Poland Pilsudski played with the first type of fascism, and some of his successors went further. In the ‘colonels’ clique’ which held power after his death, Colonel Koc, the founder of the ‘Camp of national unity’, stood for this policy. So did the ‘Union of young Poland’, an anti-semitic youth movement sponsored by the authorities. But Poland’s leaders in the late thirties vacillated between right centre and extreme right, and in the last year before Hitler’s invasion they were moving away from fascism. In Hungary General Gömbös (Premier 1932–6) was the main representative of the same tendency. He did not go so far as his bombastic speeches suggested, and his successors were lukewarm. Count Teleki, the Premier when war broke out, had moved back towards a liberal conservatism. In Rumania King Carol II tried to make himself a miniature Mussolini, establishing a one-party state and introducing a party uniform, Roman salutes and truly fascist rhetoric. Hardly anyone took him seriously, and it is doubtful whether he did himself. Behind the shining new facade

the same old abuses continued, the only difference being that the tiny surviving remnants of political free speech were abolished. In Yugoslavia Stojadinović had himself cheered as 'leader' by well-trained crowds,<sup>1</sup> and his successor Cvetković set up a uniformed official trade union organisation based on the Italian model. King Boris of Bulgaria modestly avoided such luxuries. Perhaps the Balkan dictator who came nearest to true fascism was General Metaxas of Greece. His repressive machinery was extremely efficient, he had a youth movement, 'Neolaia', clearly modelled on the Hitler Jugend, and he had thousands of post-cards printed with his own portrait and a legend describing him as the 'founder of the third Hellenic civilisation'.<sup>2</sup>

It is no accident that fascist mass parties existed only in the three countries which had the largest and economically most influential Jewish communities—Poland, Hungary and Rumania. In all three countries in the thirties an increasing number of university graduates competed each year for a decreasing number of jobs in the free professions and in business, and found their way barred by Jews. University students and young graduates formed the hard core of the fascist parties and produced their leaders and organisers. The Polish fascists were called the National Radical Camp. Their main strength came from a group which in 1934 split off from the National Democrat Party, and was joined by further groups in 1937. They stood for a racialist dictatorship of the Nazi type (though not necessarily dependent on Nazi Germany), and intended ruthlessly to purge not only the Jews but those Poles who showed sympathy for Jews or held democratic views. But the Polish fascists had little support outside the urban middle class.

The Hungarian and Rumanian fascist movements, known respectively as 'Arrow Cross' and 'Iron Guard', recruited their leaders from the same class, but also made a broad and by no means unsuccessful appeal to the peasants and workers.

Like the German National Socialists, the Hungarian and Rumanian fascist movements received financial support from some industrialists, and were encouraged by right-wing politicians. The administration was unwilling to take action against them, and the courts passed very lenient sentences when they committed crimes. Codreanu, leader of the Iron Guard, was acquitted in

<sup>1</sup> Ciano regarded him as a true fascist (*Europa verso la catastrofe*, p. 160).

<sup>2</sup> The first was classical Athens, the second the Byzantine empire.

1921 of the murder of the Prefect of Iași, and absolved from complicity in the assassination by an Iron Guardist of the Prime Minister, Ion Duca, in 1933, though his guilt on both occasions was notorious. But in Rumania in the thirties a crime was not a crime if it could be shown that the motives of its perpetrator were 'patriotic'. In Hungary there was more respect for the law, but the same tendencies were operating from the time of Gömbös onwards. Both movements—and here again there is a parallel with German Nazism—after making use of the help or toleration of the ruling class to obtain a mass following, turned against their patrons.

Both movements launched campaigns for land reform, and violently denounced capitalists. It is true that they began by attacking Jewish landowners, who were a not unimportant minority in Hungary, and Jewish capitalists, who were extremely important in both countries. But soon they used more general slogans of a vague social revolutionary type, against the whole ruling class. In Rumania, though few big estates remained, overpopulation and low agricultural output caused widespread land hunger. The Iron Guard's slogan 'One man one acre' drew great numbers of peasants into its ranks. In Hungary land reform was an even better slogan. Owing to the weaknesses of the peasant parties in both countries, there was no strong democratic tradition among the peasants. This explains why fascist agitation was so much more successful than in Poland, where such a tradition existed.

In the working class too both parties had some success. In Hungary the older trade unions were firmly held by the socialists, but in the newer industries, among unskilled workers and to some extent in the mines the Arrow Cross won a good deal of support. In Rumania police persecution of trade unions and of all Marxist propaganda had been so fierce that a large part of the workers were quite non-political, though thoroughly discontented. They inevitably followed the Iron Guard. For instance, the big Malaxa armament works in Bucarest was a Guardist stronghold.

Both parties were increasingly disliked by the governments, because they insisted on throwing off their political tutelage, because they preached revolution, and because they enjoyed the support of the Germans. King Carol II refused to be intimidated. Having set up his own dictatorship early in 1938, he arrested the Iron Guard leaders, and in the following November he had them 'shot while trying to escape'. A further massacre took place in

September 1939 after Guardists had assassinated the Prime Minister Călinescu. The Iron Guard finally came to power with German help in September 1940 when Carol was forced to abdicate after the loss of Bessarabia and northern Transylvania. But they proved so savagely incompetent and corrupt that the Germans allowed General Antonescu to suppress them in January 1941. In Hungary the traditional regime was strong enough to keep the Arrow Cross out until the last stages of the war. Bureaucracy and police were loyal, and the Hungarian rulers were able by skilful diplomacy to convince the Germans that they were more efficient allies than the Arrow Cross could be. The experience of the Iron Guard reinforced their case. It was only when every other force in Hungarian society had turned against Germany that in October 1944 the Arrow Cross leader Szálasi was brought to power.

#### FROM PARLIAMENTARISM TO DICTATORSHIP

The fundamental reason for the collapse of parliamentary democracy between the wars in Eastern Europe was the conflict between the interests of the ruling bourgeoisie—business, professional and bureaucratic—and the majority of the population. The rulers lived and thought like French lawyers or German landowners: the masses were ignorant and hungry peasants or workers whose poverty was increasing and whose chance of useful education was diminishing. Between rulers and masses was an overstaffed, corrupt and brutal bureaucracy whose notions of public service derived from Imperial Russia or Ottoman Turkey. The conflict could not be overcome by paper constitutions, even if these were based on centuries of French legal experience. The only country in which parliamentary democracy survived Czechoslovakia, had a different social structure and different administrative and moral traditions. And even this is only true of the Czech provinces, not of Slovakia. In the Czech lands there was a healthy balance of social classes—prosperous and technically efficient peasants, bourgeoisie and skilled workers. Education was of a high quality. Administration had long been as good as anywhere in the Austrian Empire. The great religious and moral tradition of Hus was still a living reality. None of these conditions applied to the greater part of any other East European country.

Apart from this general cause, each of the five other countries had specific causes for the collapse of democracy which must be

mentioned.<sup>1</sup> In Poland the change took place in 1926, when Pilsudski carried out a *coup d'état*. Its immediate cause was Pilsudski's personal ambition and intolerance. He was obsessed with the idea of Poland's unity and greatness, and could not endure either to be out of power himself or to watch the disputes of the parliamentary parties, which seemed to him no more than sordid wrangles. At first he left a good deal of freedom to parliament, but from 1930 the pressure tightened, and in 1935 a new constitution was introduced which formally put an end to democracy. In Hungary communist revolution was followed by a counter-revolution which restored the semi-feudal system of before 1914 with little change. The gendarmes and the open ballot kept the opposition out of the countryside, and liberal and socialist forces in Budapest alone were not strong enough to challenge the power of the regime. In Rumania the restoration of King Carol II in 1930 was of decisive importance. Years of skilful intrigue enabled him to split up the traditional parties and set up his personal dictatorship in January 1938. By this time Guardist lawlessness had so alarmed the bourgeoisie that it was glad to see a 'strong hand' which seemed to protect it from upheaval. In Yugoslavia the quarrel between Serbs and Croats threatened the existence of the state. When Stepan Radić was murdered in parliament in 1928, all the Croatian members left the house. King Alexander in January 1929 proclaimed a royal dictatorship, but instead of using his power to force Serbs and Croats into agreement he played them off against each other and maintained his personal regime, allowing cruel acts of repression by the police. When he was murdered in 1934 his successor Prince Regent Paul loosened the grip a little, but civil liberties were never restored up to the German invasion. The belated Serb-Croat compromise of August 1939 did not appease the old passions. Too much bitterness remained, and the outbreak of war in Europe meant that there would not be time to settle down. In Bulgaria the bloody repression of 1923, and the series of Macedonian terrorist crimes throughout the twenties, stored up hatred. The 1931-4 governments under the democrats Malinov and Mushanov were more genuinely democratic, but could not establish order. The group of officers, led by Colonel Damian Velchev and Kimon Gheorghiev, who overthrew it in May 1934 were not fascists. They wanted to 'clean up' the country, but before they had made up

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed treatment of both the general and immediate causes, see my *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1941*.

their minds how this was to be done they had been overthrown by King Boris, who did not relinquish power until his death in 1943.<sup>1</sup> In Greece everything was confused by the blood feud between Royalists and Republicans, and the sum of misery was enormously increased by the settlement of over a million uprooted Greeks from Asia Minor, whom the Greek economy had not absorbed by 1940.

But there is one more factor, which was always present, and after 1933 was dominant—the rivalry of the Great Powers, which divided the small states into hostile camps, and compelled them to spend on armaments a growing proportion of the meagre wealth which, even if fully used for peaceful purposes, could not have guaranteed their peoples a decent life. To Great Power policy we must now turn.

<sup>1</sup> For Macedonian terrorism inside Bulgaria, and for the political aims and actions of the 1934 military group, see Swire, *Bulgarian Conspiracy*.

## *Part Two*

## WAR

### CHAPTER THREE

### THE CONQUEST OF EASTERN EUROPE

WHEN Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich in January 1933, and so had a chance to put into practice his plans for making Germany the greatest Power in Europe and in the world, it was natural that he should pay great attention to the countries of Eastern Europe. Throughout the centuries German economic and cultural links with these countries had been close, and many Germans had wide personal experience and knowledge of them. Eastern Europe was a 'no-man's-land', possession of which would give any Power the first place on the continent. It was essential to control it before challenging either of the two great land Powers with whom Germany's policy of expansion must ultimately bring her into conflict, France or Russia.

Germany had certain specific claims in relation to Eastern Europe. The first was the eastern frontier—Danzig and the Polish corridor. Of all Hitler's 'national aspirations' in the East, this was the most genuinely popular with the German people. Germans of all social classes and nearly all political opinions felt it intolerable that 'ancient German land' should be ruled by the 'inferior' Poles. The second was union with Austria—the 'Anschluss'. On this the Germans felt less strongly, as at least in the North there was suspicion and contempt for the Austrians. But Hitler was an Austrian and a good general case could certainly be made out for the unification of the two German states. The third claim was the annexation of the Bohemian borderlands, the 'Sudetan provinces' of Czechoslovakia. Here too a good case could be made on grounds of nationality, but among Germans in the Reich the response was at first lukewarm. These lands had belonged before 1918 to Austria, not Germany, and North Germans were not much more interested in their fate than in that of Austria. Finally there was a broader and vaguer claim for the recognition of a general right for the Reich government to interest itself in the fate of the considerable German minorities

in South-Eastern Europe. These too were for the most part of Austrian rather than of North German origin. There were about 500,000 each in Hungary and Yugoslavia and 700,000 in Rumania. The German public was not much interested in them, but the Nazi party took up their cause, and varied in its claims from 'protecting them from oppression' to incorporating them in the Reich.

But more important than these claims, which played a greater part in the propaganda directed both to the German public and to foreign opinion than in the actual plans of the Nazi leaders, was the need to break or to render harmless the treaties which bound the East European countries to each other or to other Great Powers. France had treaties of alliance with Poland (1921) and Czechoslovakia (1924) and treaties of friendship with Yugoslavia and Rumania (1927). The most important inter-East European treaties were the Little Entente (1922) linking Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania, the Polish-Rumanian treaty (1921), and the Balkan Entente (1934) which included Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. Italy had created by the Rome Protocols (1934) a block with Austria and Hungary, which was directed against the Little Entente and especially Yugoslavia. She also had a treaty of alliance with Albania (1927) and an unimportant treaty of friendship with Rumania (1927). The most important of all the treaties affecting Eastern Europe were the Franco-Soviet pact and the Czechoslovak-Soviet alliance, both signed in 1935. Hitler set himself systematically to break these various alliances. He used not only diplomacy in the normal sense, but economic penetration and propaganda—including 'export' of anti-semitism, anti-Bolshevism and various forms of social demagoguery. But his most powerful weapon was his success in the face of the Western Powers. When he openly reintroduced conscription, reoccupied the Rhineland, and rearmed on a vast scale without incurring more than verbal protests from the victors of 1918, when one of these victors, Italy, collaborated closely with him in the 'Berlin-Rome Axis', and the other two preferred 'appeasement' to sanctions, it is not surprising that the smaller states tried to make their own terms with him.

Marshal Pilsudski, the elderly dictator of Poland, twice in 1933 proposed to the French government preventive action by the armies of both countries against Hitler.<sup>1</sup> The first request was

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *Diplomatic Prelude*, pp. 10, 15. My treatment of Polish foreign policy in the following pages owes much to this brilliant work.

refused and the second ignored. Poland then sought an agreement with Germany. The first exploratory step was an interview between the Polish chargé d'affaires in Berlin, Wysocki, and Hitler in May 1933. In the autumn drafts of a non-aggression treaty were exchanged between the two governments, and on 26 January 1934 a treaty was signed. During the following years co-operation between Germany and Poland went further than mere non-aggression. Both Powers had a common policy of hostility to Czechoslovakia, friendship with Hungary, and encouragement of fascist and pro-German elements in Rumania. The growth of fascist influence inside Poland, both among some government supporters and among a part of the opposition, strengthened this policy. Poland's traditional hostility to Russia was emphasised, while her no less traditional hostility to Germany was passed over in silence. Poland was alarmed by the Franco-Soviet pact, and systematically opposed the various attempts by French and British statesmen during 1935 to conclude an 'Eastern Locarno'. It is true that basically Poland's rulers, even including the Foreign Minister Beck who was regarded abroad as 'pro-German', still favoured a policy of 'balance' between their two great neighbours. They were not completely committed to Germany, and did not wish to abandon the alliance with France. In 1936 Pilsudski's successor as head of the army, Marshal Rydz-Smigly, visited France and obtained by the agreement of Rambouillet a credit of two million francs, without any political conditions.<sup>1</sup> Acceptance of French money did not, however, prevent Poland from continuing to support Germany against France's ally Czechoslovakia, in whose dismemberment she took part in October 1938.

Disruption of the Little Entente was an important aim of German foreign policy. Success was quickest in Yugoslavia. Here at first German and Italian policy was opposed. Yugoslavia was the successor of Austria-Hungary as Italy's rival in the Adriatic. Italian diplomacy therefore aimed at her encirclement as a first stage towards the final goal of domination of the whole Mediterranean. Italy had shown sympathy for Hungarian, Bulgarian and Albanian territorial claims on Yugoslavia, and had encouraged Croatian and Macedonian extremists. Disruption from within and dismemberment from outside seemed to be the purpose behind Italian policy to Yugoslavia. Relations were at their worst

<sup>1</sup> M. Noel, French ambassador in Warsaw, wished political 'strings' to be attached to the loan, but his advice was disregarded in Paris. See Noel, *L'aggression allemande contre la Pologne*.

in 1934. The Yugoslav government feared the restoration of a Habsburg in Vienna under Italian protection. To this it even preferred incorporation of Austria in Germany. After the failure of the Austrian Nazi *putsch* of July 1934, in which Dollfuss was murdered, Austrian Nazi refugees found hospitality in Yugoslavia. In October 1934 King Alexander of Yugoslavia was murdered by a Macedonian terrorist, and the Yugoslav government believed both the Italian and Hungarian authorities to be to some extent involved. During the year German influence in Belgrade increased. An important trade treaty was signed. Marshal Göring began to spend holidays in the country, and represented Germany at the king's funeral. German policy definitely opposed the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, preferring to keep this considerable state united and make it a friend of Germany.

Events in Abyssinia and Spain, and the growth of Mussolini's ambitions at the expense of the Western Powers, brought Italy and Germany closer together in 1936 and 1937. Italy ceased to oppose German influence in Austria, and encouraged the government of Schuschnigg to make concessions to Hitler. When even the hope that Austria would be kept nominally independent as a buffer state between the two dictators receded, Mussolini accepted the necessity of the Anschluss.<sup>1</sup> He also accepted Germany's policy towards Yugoslavia. In 1935 Milan Stojadinović became Prime Minister in Belgrade. Impressed with the value to his country of trade with the Axis countries, and sympathising with fascist ideas, Stojadinović sought the friendship of Rome and Berlin. In January 1937 he signed a treaty of friendship with Bulgaria, which was already closely linked with both Italy and Germany. In March 1937 an Italo-Yugoslav treaty of friendship was signed in Belgrade. The evidence of Ciano's diary and papers is that the Italian government took this treaty seriously. Ciano personally liked and trusted Stojadinović, and intended to base his whole Balkan policy on collaboration with Belgrade.<sup>2</sup> The idea of dismemberment of Yugoslavia was replaced by that of a joint partition of the peninsula, with Italy to take most of Albania, Yugoslavia the rest and perhaps also Salonica from Greece. Meanwhile Stojadinović undertook to desert Czechoslovakia, to seek reconciliation with Hungary, and to use his influence with the Rumanians to do likewise. In the

<sup>1</sup> For a clear discussion of the Austrian problem in German-Italian relations, see Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*, chapter 6. For the Austrian background, Borkenau, *Austria and After*, and for the events leading up to the Anschluss, Gedyé, *Fallen Bastions*.

<sup>2</sup> Ciano, *L'Europa Verso la catastrofe*, pp. 160-2.

summer of 1938 he assured Ciano that he would on no account fight the Hungarians for the sake of the Czechs, and that he was quite content to see Czechoslovakia lose most of her territory and be reduced to a small 'neutralised' Czech rump.

Rumanian policy was more cautious. The Great Power nearest her frontiers was Russia, which had never renounced its right to Bessarabia. Even without this dispute, relations could not have been good between a communist state and one ruled by a reactionary semi-dictatorship which tolerated the rapid rise of a pro-German fascist movement. But as Poland was determined in no circumstances to permit the passage of Soviet troops through her territory, the implementation of the Franco-Russo-Czechoslovak pact required the co-operation of Rumania. While the Bucarest Foreign Ministry was held by Titulescu, the champion of the League of Nations, the chances of such co-operation seemed good. But in 1936 King Carol dismissed Titulescu, and adopted a policy of balance between the Axis and Anglo-French groups. Rumanian help to Czechoslovakia thus became more uncertain. But Rumania at least did not, like Yugoslavia, abandon her ally, or, like Poland, collaborate with the Germans against her. Early in 1938 Carol suppressed the avowed fifth column of the Axis, the Iron Guard, and took policy definitely into his own hands. Right up to Munich he at least remained formally loyal to his obligations. What would have been his attitude if the Soviet-Czech alliance had come into operation will never be known, for the Munich agreement spared him the necessity to choose.

Czechoslovakia was for five years the principal object of Hitler's diplomatic offensive. If her statesmen had been willing to make an agreement similar to the German-Polish treaty of 1934, had refused alliance with Russia and loosened their ties with France, it is quite possible that Hitler would have told the Sudeten Germans to make no trouble for the Prague government. Hints to this effect were made by German spokesmen. But Dr. Beneš (Foreign Minister till 1935 and then President of the Republic) believed in the strength and loyalty of France and feared that co-operation with Germany would in the end make impossible within Czechoslovakia the democratic institutions to which he and the great majority of his people were devoted. So the offers were rejected, the treaty with Russia was signed, and Czechoslovakia remained, in the words of Goebbels, a 'dagger pointed at the heart of Germany'. German diplomacy succeeded in isolating her from her natural friends in Eastern

Europe, and was also able to employ disruptive forces within her own frontiers. The first was the German minority, three and a half million strong, of which since the elections of 1935 the overwhelming majority supported the thinly camouflaged Nazi movement of Henlein—the 'Sudeten German Party'. The second was the autonomist and fascist Slovak People's Party led by the priest Hlinka, and after his death by another priest, Mgr. Tiso. The third was the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, rather less than a million strong. The fourth was the small Polish minority in the Silesian border province of Teschen, which had been a source of dispute between Poland and Czechoslovakia since 1919. Finally Hitler skilfully persuaded the governments of France and Britain to disinterest themselves in Czechoslovakia, and to ignore the wishes of one of her great allies, the Soviet Union.

By the frontier settlements which followed the Munich agreement, Czechoslovakia ceded territory to Germany, Hungary and Poland, each of which acquired in addition to their own compatriots considerable numbers of Czechs and Slovaks. The remainder was divided into three widely autonomous units. The first was a rump of Bohemia and Moravia. The second was Slovakia, now controlled by the People's Party fascists, who made it quite clear that they were only waiting for a favourable moment and the approval of Berlin to break away completely. The third was the easternmost province of 'Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia', which became the centre of Ukrainian nationalism. Its spokesmen called this small and backward land a 'Ukrainian Piedmont', from which would come the liberation of the Ukrainians subject to Polish or Soviet rule.

In the year between Munich and the outbreak of war, the first important event in south-east Europe was the dismissal of Stojadinović by Prince Regent Paul in February 1939. Its causes lay probably in internal rather than in foreign policy, in the surprisingly small government majority at the elections of December 1938, and in the Regent's desire to reach agreement with the Croats, to which the personality of Stojadinović was an obstacle. But the dismissal showed the Axis governments that in the last resort the power in Yugoslavia lay not with the Premier but with the Prince Regent, whom they rightly regarded as an Anglophile. The friendship of Stojadinović was too frail a basis for friendship with Yugoslavia, and the foreign policy of Prince Paul was too uncertain to be made the foundation of Axis policy in the Balkan peninsula. After February 1939 the Axis attitude to Yugoslavia

therefore changed. In January Ciano, on a visit to Belgrade, was eagerly discussing with Stojadinović the partition of Albania and an outlet for Yugoslavia to Salonica. In April, when Italian troops occupied Albania, the Yugoslav Minister in Rome rushed round to Ciano to seek information on the event, which had taken him by surprise, and was received with cool politeness.<sup>1</sup>

The occupation of Albania was the immediate cause of the unilateral British guarantee to Greece, but none was given to Yugoslavia. Prince Paul hoped to maintain good relations with the Axis, and made a tour of the European capitals in the early summer. It is now clear from Ciano's papers that the Axis did not trust him. In May Ribbentrop told Ciano that Hitler was satisfied with Yugoslavia's neutral attitude, but made it clear that if dissolution came from within, then Axis policy in Yugoslavia would be determined by Italy, whose superior interest in the Mediterranean area the Germans recognised. In August, however, both Ribbentrop and Hitler expressed distrust of Yugoslavia. They compared her relation to Italy with that of Poland to Germany. Both countries were 'unfaithful', and would use any future war between the Axis and the West as an opportunity to stab the Axis Powers in the back. Therefore Germany must liquidate Poland, and it was desirable that Italy should do the same with Yugoslavia.<sup>2</sup> The Italians, however, hesitated to accept this advice. Meanwhile 'dissolution from within' was at least postponed by the Cvetković-Maček agreement of 25 August, which gave Croatia a large measure of self-government and brought the representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party into the central government in Belgrade. When the European war broke out, Yugoslavia seemed internally stronger than she had been for many years.

In the events of the summer of 1939 the Balkans were a side-show: the crisis which led to war really began with the annexation of rump Czechoslovakia on 15 March. The Prague government was so bold as to dismiss the autonomous government of Slovakia, which was fairly openly preparing secession, on 9 March. Tiso appealed to Hitler, and on 12 March was summoned to Berlin. There he was urged at once to proclaim the independence of Slovakia. If he refused, the German government would make no objection to a Hungarian occupation of part of Slovakia. Faced with the prospect of partition between Germany and Hungary, Tiso accepted an independence in vassalage to Hitler which he was in any case glad to have.

<sup>1</sup> Ciano, *op. cit.*, pp. 423-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 431, 451, 455.

Meanwhile the Czech President Hacha was summoned to Berlin and forced to accept a German protectorate over Bohemia and Moravia, which were to be incorporated in the Reich. On 15 March German troops entered Prague. Finally Ruthenia, the abortive Piedmont of the Ukrainian nationalists, was occupied by the Hungarians, and a common Hungarian-Polish frontier was established. This was the last territorial change in Europe which gave pleasure to the rulers of Poland, and by now their joy had a sour after-taste, for they were surrounded on three sides by German-controlled territory.

Polish-German relations had deteriorated since the autumn. On 24 October 1938 Ribbentrop had had an important conversation at Berchtesgaden with the Polish Ambassador Lipski. He had expressed a desire to place Polish-German co-operation, which had recently been so profitable to both states, on a more solid basis, by eliminating remaining causes of friction and considering the possibilities of further common action in a wider field. Poland was asked to approve the incorporation of Danzig in the Reich and to grant Germany an extra-territorial road and several-track railway across the 'corridor'. In return Poland would be given a free port in Danzig and extra-territorial communications with it. Both states would guarantee each other's frontiers for ten or twenty-five years. Both Powers would pursue a policy of joint action, especially with regard to the emigration of Jews, the colonial question, and a 'joint policy towards Russia on the basis of the anti-Comintern pact'. After some weeks' consideration Beck gave an unfavourable reply. The subject was raised again when Beck visited Hitler at Berchtesgaden on 5 January 1939, and when Ribbentrop repaid the visit in Warsaw at the end of the same month. In March the Poles began to concentrate troops on the Danzig border, and the German press started an inspired campaign against Poland. At the end of March the British cabinet decided to give a guarantee to Poland. At the beginning of April Beck visited London, and on 6th the first agreement was signed.

Looking back after the event, it seems as if Ribbentrop's original offer may genuinely have been aimed at the consolidation of Polish-German friendship, and the Germans may have been genuinely disappointed at the refusal. After all, Poland had supported German policy for more than four years, was bitterly anti-Russian and anti-communist, and was being given a chance to take part in Hitler's intended conquest of Russia

and to take a share of the pickings for herself. Beck indeed still remains an enigmatic figure. It may never be certain how far he was personally willing to go in collaboration with Germany. But it is certain that Polish public opinion was growing ever more violently anti-German, and that the army was against concessions to Hitler. If Beck had favoured acceptance of the German terms, he would not only have faced a hostile public, but he would have been unable to carry his colleagues with him. In fact he did not try. Hitler for his part was not prepared to buy Polish friendship by a definite renunciation of Danzig and communications across the Corridor. Thus the conflict became too sharp for peaceful settlement. This became clear to the world when Britain gave her guarantee, and was formally confirmed by Hitler's speech of 28 April, in which he repudiated the German-Polish non-aggression treaty of 1934 and the Anglo-German naval agreement of 1935.

The occupation of Prague had caused alarm in Rumania, where for a time a Hungarian invasion of Transylvania, with the blessing of Germany, was feared. Desperately keen to avert German hostility, King Carol accepted a new trade treaty with Germany, which gave the latter far-reaching advantages in the future development of the Rumanian economy. At the same time Bucarest appealed to London, and the third guarantee was granted by Chamberlain with equal haste. Like the guarantee to Greece, the guarantee to Rumania was unilateral, whereas the agreement with Poland bound both parties to help each other.

In the new situation the attitude of the Soviet Union was clearly of the greatest importance. After Munich the Western Powers utterly ignored Moscow, apparently hoping that a new era of co-operation with the Axis had opened. In his speech to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party, held on 10 March, Stalin had denounced the fascist aggressors, but had also declared that the Soviet Union was not prepared to 'pull the chestnuts out of the fire' for other Powers. After the fall of Prague, British public opinion, both in and out of Parliament, pressed the Government to discuss with the Russians common defence against German expansion. Mr. Chamberlain showed little eagerness. Proposals and counter-proposals were exchanged in April. Early in May Litvinov was replaced as Foreign Minister by Molotov. This warning did not quicken the pace of British diplomacy. During the summer the British advanced reluctantly stage by stage, and at each stage Soviet suspiciousness increased. The main obstacle

throughout was the attitude of the East European states which it was proposed to guarantee. Poles and Rumanians objected strongly to the passage of Soviet troops across their territory, and the Baltic states objected to being guaranteed against 'direct or indirect' aggression from Germany. In the light of later events their attitude is understandable. It is also true that Britain, having made an alliance with Poland, could hardly begin implementing it by forcing her ally to accept from a third Power conditions which were repugnant to her. Nor could Britain make a separate alliance with the third Power which simply ignored her ally's wishes. This was all the more true because since Munich the word of Britain hardly commanded universal respect: another 'let down' would have proved fatal. Thus it must be admitted that, having made the commitment to Poland, Mr. Chamberlain could hardly have acted otherwise than he did. A serious criticism, however, is that the guarantee to Poland should never have been given before ascertaining what would be the Soviet attitude. If Britain was seeking a powerful ally in the East, then it was Russia not Poland that she should first have approached. Only when an Anglo-Russian alliance had been made should guarantees to the smaller states have been considered.

Whether, if approached in this way, the Soviet government would have concluded an alliance with Britain, can never be proved. Even if it had not been necessary to consider the opposition of the small East European states, and even if the British and the Russians had had far greater confidence in each other's political intentions than was the case, there would still have been the objection that Britain could not for the first months of war have provided any effective help on land, and that the French capacity for offensive operations was in doubt. Russia would have borne the main brunt of the German attack. It was probably this which finally decided the Soviet leaders in favour of agreement with Germany, for which the Germans had been negotiating since the beginning of June.<sup>1</sup> In the words of the senior German Foreign Office official Schnurre, in conversation with Soviet

<sup>1</sup> An estimate of Soviet and German intentions during the summer of 1939 must consider (a) when the Soviet government first decided to make overtures to the Germans; (b) when the German government first considered a rapprochement with the U.S.S.R.; (c) when the two governments finally decided to make an agreement. The date of (a) would seem to be the Stalin speech to the 18th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party (10 March); of (b) the end of May. The final decision on each side, however, can hardly be dated before August. For the whole problem see Namier, *op. cit.*, U.S. State Department *Nazi-Soviet Relations*; Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, vol. 2, and Rossi, *Deux ans d'alliance Germano-Soviétique*.

diplomats in Berlin: 'What could England offer Russia? At best, participation in a European war and the hostility of Germany, but not a single desirable end for Russia. What could we offer on the other hand? Neutrality and staying out of a possible European conflict, and if Moscow wished, a German-Russian understanding on mutual interests which, just as in former times, would work out to the advantage of both countries.'<sup>1</sup>

Two further motives can be found for the German-Soviet agreement, which was signed in Moscow on 23 August by the two Foreign Ministers, Ribbentrop and Molotov.

One was the recovery of territory once held by Imperial Russia and mainly inhabited by Ukrainians or White Russians. By the secret additional protocol to the non-aggression treaty of 23 August 1939 spheres of interest were laid down for 'the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to' the Baltic states and Poland. Finland, Latvia, Esthonia and eastern Poland were to be the Soviet sphere, western Poland and Lithuania the German. By the secret additional protocol to the Boundary and Friendship Treaty of 28 September, Lithuania was transferred to the Soviet sphere, while the German sphere in Poland was enlarged. A further clause in the protocol of 23 August had also 'called attention' to the Soviet 'interest in Bessarabia', in which Germany 'declared complete political disinterestedness'.

The other additional Soviet motive is less certain. It is the desire to precipitate a war between the 'two imperialist camps'. Encouragement of contradictions within the capitalist world has always been a principle of Soviet diplomacy, and here was a magnificent opportunity to apply it. There is of course no final documentary proof that this thought was uppermost in Stalin's mind at the time, but it is a reasonable deduction from the known facts. There is even some concrete indication of it in the way in which Stalin 'eagerly concurred' with Ribbentrop's remarks on the weakness of England, and spurred the German Foreign Minister on to smash the British Empire, built on 'the stupidity of the other countries that always let themselves be bluffed'.<sup>2</sup> These words are in crude contrast to the unctuously self-righteous phrases in which Soviet propagandists extolled the pact as a contribution to world peace.

Did Russia gain or lose on balance? Defenders of Soviet policy

<sup>1</sup> U.S. State Department, *Nazi-Soviet Relations* (hereafter referred to simply by its title), p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 74.

use arguments very similar to those used by Chamberlain and his friends to justify Munich. They insist that Russia gained valuable time in which to prepare herself for the ultimate German attack, and that the territorial gains of 1939 and 1940 provided her with a defence in depth which saved her in 1941. There is no doubt much to be said for this view, and future historians may decide that it is right. But there is another side to it. The main difference between the military effort of France in 1914 and in 1940, the main reason why Joffre stopped the Germans at the Marne but Gamelin and Weygand were overwhelmed, is still imperfectly understood in Britain and in America. It is not a question of Maginot-mindedness, right-wing or left-wing defeatism, low morale, fifth column, or any of the other similar fashionable explanations. These factors may have played some part, but they were not decisive. The decisive factor was that in 1914 a Russian army was fighting, and in 1940 it was not. Because there was a Bolshevik revolution and a Brest-Litovsk treaty, people forget that the armies of Imperial Russia for three years engaged a large part of the German army and made possible the final victory in the West. In 1940 there was no 'second front'. The French and British armies were alone, France collapsed, and the British were driven from the Continent. A year later it was Russia's turn, she too was alone, and her people's sufferings were terrible. Against the short-term gains of 1939-41 must be set the losses of 1941-4, the three dreadful years before the Anglo-Saxon armies established themselves once more on French soil. By refusing France a second front in 1939 and 1940, the Soviet leaders deprived themselves of a second front in 1941, 1942 and 1943.

It was in Eastern Europe that Soviet short-term gains were obtained, and it was in Eastern Europe that the conflicts developed which led to the final breach between Germany and Russia. The first in time, and perhaps the most important, was the Rumanian problem. The Soviet government waited for a good opportunity to make good its claim to Bessarabia. In a speech in March 1940 to the Supreme Soviet, Molotov expressed the hope that the Soviet Union would 'peacefully recover possession'. Two months later, the collapse of France brought utter demoralisation to Rumania, whose foreign policy for twenty years had been principally based on French strength. The success of German arms made it urgent for the Soviet ally to assert the remainder of the claims recognised by the Ribbentrop-Molotov treaty. The Soviet Union therefore not only annexed the Baltic states but decided to force a solution of

the Bessarabian question. On 23 June Molotov informed the German Ambassador of his intention to take not only Bessarabia but also Bukovina, a province which had never belonged to Russia, but had been acquired by Rumania from Austria in 1918. Bukovina lies north-east of the Carpathian mountain barrier, and is thus geographically connected with the plains of Galicia and South Russia as much as with Moldavia. Its population is partly Ukrainian and partly Rumanian. The German government expressed surprise at this additional claim, which had not been mentioned in the previous year, but agreement was reached when Molotov decided to claim only the northern part of the province, where Ukrainians undoubtedly predominated. The Germans asked only that the Soviet authorities should assist the resettlement of the German minority of 100,000 from Bessarabia, and that the transfer of territory should be accomplished peacefully, in order that the production of the Rumanian oil wells should not be affected. On 26 June a Soviet ultimatum of twenty-four hours was addressed to the Rumanian government. The German government instructed its Minister in Bucarest, Fabritius, to 'advise the Rumanian government to yield to the Soviet government's demand'. On 27 June King Carol held a Crown Council in Bucarest. Some Councillors, including the historian and ex-Premier Professor Iorga, urged resistance, but in view of the German advice, the King decided to surrender.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Soviet government gained some territory, pushed back its frontier from Odessa, and became a riparian state on the Danube. In return it antagonised many Rumanian patriots who might have been its friends, and gave a splendid propaganda weapon to those who were in any case its enemies.

The annexation of Bessarabia started the dismemberment of Rumania. Bulgaria and Hungary presented their bills. Rumania now committed herself to a pro-Axis policy. Germany valued Rumania's resources highly, and possessed a useful fifth column inside the country. She therefore wished to spare Rumania as far as possible. But she also had to give some support to Bulgaria and Hungary, whose co-operation with the Axis was also desirable. The Axis Powers at first encouraged the three governments to work out an agreement by themselves. But negotiations failed, and patriotic feeling in Rumania was working up to a frenzy. As it was essential for the Axis to prevent a war which might destroy the oil fields, it was decided to arbitrate between Hungary

<sup>1</sup> Gafencu, *Préliminaires de la guerre à l'Est*, p. 292.

and Rumania. The frontier dictated at Vienna on 30 August did not satisfy either side. It restored to Hungary about one million Hungarians together with a Rumanian minority of over a million. The main industrial resources were left to Rumania, while the strategically important Carpathian line in the east was almost all in Hungarian hands. More than half a million Hungarians were left in Rumania.

Public opinion in Rumania was undoubtedly for resistance. It was fear of Soviet action that decided the Rumanian government to yield. On 29 August the Soviet Assistant Foreign Commissar, Dekanozov, summoned the Rumanian minister Gafencu, and delivered a 'verbal note' of protest concerning an incident on the Moldavian frontier, which 'might take a more serious turn'. Whether this action was intended to help the pressure exerted by the Axis Powers on Rumania, or was an indirect warning to the Axis Powers that the Soviet government was interested in what was happening in Rumania, is not clear. It is, however, certain that it was exploited by the Axis governments. The opinion of Gafencu, who was then Rumanian Minister in Moscow, is that 'the danger of an immediate Russian descent in Moldavia was the decisive argument invoked by the Vienna arbiters to impose their arbitration'.<sup>1</sup> Rumania then yielded.

Bulgaria had already received south Dobrudja, a province whose population was mainly non-Rumanian, and which, apart from considerations of prestige, the Rumanians did not very much mind losing. Thus in two months Rumania had lost more than a third of her territory and some three million Rumanians as well as about two million subjects of non-Rumanian national origin.

Having imposed these heavy losses, the Axis Powers offered as compensation a formal guarantee of all Rumania's remaining frontiers. This could only be interpreted as a guarantee directed against the Soviet Union. The fascist government of General Antonescu and the Iron Guard, which came to power when King Carol, his prestige destroyed by the national losses, abdicated on 6 September, interpreted it in this sense. Molotov reproached the German government for failing to consult Moscow beforehand, and this led to an exchange of recriminations, based on divergent interpretations of Article 3 of the Non-Aggression Pact. The Soviet point of view was maintained at length in a memorandum dated 21 September. Divergence of views between Berlin and

Moscow was also revealed at the conference which met in Bucarest at the end of October to decide the new regime for the Danube. Moscow wished the delta to be regulated by a bilateral Soviet-Rumanian authority, while the Axis Powers, with the support of Rumania, wished a multilateral Danube commission to regulate the whole course of the river. The conference could not reach a decision. It was adjourned at the end of December and never reassembled.

On 13 October Ribbentrop wrote a personal letter to Stalin, in which he invited Molotov to visit Berlin to discuss the whole field of Russia's relations with Germany and with the Three Power Alliance. The invitation in some ways resembles Ribbentrop's approach to Poland in October 1938. A year of German-Soviet co-operation had, like four years of German-Polish collaboration from 1934 to 1938, brought limited but considerable advantages to both parties. The time had come to see whether this collaboration could be extended to a world scale, or must break down and give place to open conflict. From this point of view Molotov's visit, which took place on 12-13 November, was a historical turning-point. The German proposals were briefly the following. The Three Power Alliance and the Soviet Union were to sign a treaty of political and economic co-operation, recognising each other's spheres of interest, consulting each other on problems arising from contact between these spheres, and giving no support to any combination of Powers directed against any of them. The Soviet sphere was to be 'south of the territory of the U.S.S.R. in the direction of the Indian Ocean'. There was to be a further agreement to bring pressure jointly to bear on Turkey for a revision of the Montreux convention on the Straits. In future Black Sea Powers were to have the right to send warships through the Straits into the Mediterranean, but no non-Black Sea Powers, not even Germany and Italy themselves, were to have the right to send warships through the Straits into the Black Sea.<sup>1</sup> The terms seem generous. In particular the proposed settlement of the Straits was one for which the Tsars had unsuccessfully striven for generations.

But the terms were not good enough for Moscow. It was not that Moscow objected in principle to a partition of the world between Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviet Union: it was that Moscow's share of the loot ought to be bigger. The official Soviet counter-proposals were communicated on 25 November.

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 255-8.

The Soviet sphere was to be defined as 'the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf', but more specific concessions were demanded with regard to Turkey and Bulgaria. The secret protocol on Turkey was to include the cession of a base for land and naval forces of the U.S.S.R. 'on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles'. Bulgaria was to conclude a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union. The Powers were to recognise that 'Bulgaria is geographically located inside the security zone of the Black Sea boundaries of the U.S.S.R., and that it is therefore a political necessity that a mutual assistance pact be concluded . . . which shall in no way affect the internal regime in Bulgaria, her sovereignty or independence'.<sup>1</sup> During the discussions with Hitler and Ribbentrop, Molotov had raised several times the idea of a pact with Bulgaria, which was to be a sort of compensation to Moscow for the Axis guarantee to Rumania. Hitler replied that he could give no answer until he had consulted Mussolini, and until he knew the views of the Bulgarian government. The last point may have been an insincere excuse from the German point of view, but it was a real point none the less, for the experience of the Baltic states, which had made pacts with Russia in 1939 with profuse Soviet assurances of non-interference in internal affairs, could hardly be encouraging to the Bulgarian government.

The disparity between the German and Soviet proposals was too great to permit agreement. The negotiations were not continued, and relations between the two Powers deteriorated. But it would be rash to assume that the Germans never intended to establish a firm basis for co-operation with the Soviet Union for a longer period, and that conflict was inevitable. If agreement could have been reached, a German-Japanese-Soviet bloc, controlling all Europe and Asia and most of Africa, and directed against the United States and the outlying portions of the British Empire, was by no means an unrealisable project. But the Soviet appetite was too large and too impatient. For the sake of aims in Bulgaria, surely a position of secondary importance, the Soviet leaders threw away the chance not only to gain lands in the Middle East, but to watch in peace while the greatest capitalist states exhausted themselves in a titanic struggle on the world scale.

Even after the failure of the November talks, it is perhaps too much to say that Hitler finally decided on war. The 'Bar-

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 258-9.

barossa' operational instruction was signed on 18 December. But Hitler could countermand orders as well as give them. No war is quite certain until it breaks out. During the first six months of 1941, however, German-Soviet relations undoubtedly grew worse, and the main immediate cause for this was events in the Balkans.

During the summer Mussolini had been impatient to start a little victorious war against Greece, but the German government had held him back. At the end of October, while Hitler was visiting Franco on the Spanish-French frontier, he decided to act. He informed the Führer when they met in Florence on 28th, when military operations were already in progress. This gesture of Italian independence no doubt annoyed the Germans, but they could only accept it.<sup>1</sup> After brief initial successes, the Italian troops were driven back by the Greeks, who advanced triumphantly into Albania. As the months went by the Italian situation did not improve. To the Axis governments there seemed a real danger that the British might establish in Greece a European bridge-head. Besides this the Axis needed southern Greece and Crete as bases against the Middle East. Therefore the German government decided to intervene in the conflict. For this it was necessary for German troops to march through Bulgaria, and for Yugoslavia's neutrality to be assured. During January and February the Soviet government made clear its unwillingness to see German troops in Bulgaria, arguing that this might bring the Turks into the war and the British to the Straits. But the Germans went ahead. On 27 February they informed Moscow that Bulgaria was about to adhere to the Three Power Alliance (this actually took place on 1 March), and that German troops would enter Bulgaria in order to deter the British from establishing themselves in Greece, but that there would be no attack on Turkey. Molotov coldly replied by repeating the phrase that Bulgaria came within 'the security zone of the U.S.S.R.' Soviet disapproval of the German action was also made public by a statement of the official Tass agency.

During March Axis diplomacy pressed and wooed Yugoslavia. The hope of annexing Salonica was held out to the Yugoslavs. Prince Paul and most of his ministers wished to avoid commitments to the Axis, and there could be no doubt that public opinion was against it. An attempt had been made to strengthen

<sup>1</sup> For details of the Italian attack on Greece, see Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*, and Donosti, *Mussolini e l'Europa*.

Yugoslavia's freedom of action by the treaty of friendship signed in December 1940 with Hungary. The spokesmen of both governments poured out compliments to the Axis, but it was clear that both hoped by this action to support each other's neutrality. But ultimately the pressure proved too much for Prince Paul, and on 25 March the Yugoslav Premier and Foreign Minister signed the Three Power Pact in Vienna. The Yugoslav people's reaction was the *coup d'état* of 27 March, carried out by a small number of officer conspirators but undoubtedly representing the feeling of at least the Serbian nation. The government that followed the *coup* was formed for the greater part not of officers but of the old politicians of the democratic opposition. Their most obvious characteristic was Serbian nationalism and distrust of the Croats. Indeed there is some ground for the suspicion that they were more interested in undoing the concessions made to the Croats by Prince Paul in 1939 than in resisting the Axis. Certainly they hastened to assure Berlin and Rome that they considered the signature of the Three Power Alliance binding. At the same time they sought closer relations with Moscow.

Between the world wars there had been no diplomatic relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. They had been restored in 1940, with the blessing of the Axis. Milan Gavrilović, leader of the Serbian Agrarian Party and first Yugoslav Ambassador to Moscow, was a good friend of the politicians who formed the government of 27 March. In fact he was declared to be a minister in that government while serving in Moscow. He was also a good friend of Great Britain. Gavrilović sought closer friendship with Moscow, and his efforts met with a surprising response. On 4 April Molotov summoned the German Ambassador to his office to inform him that the Yugoslav government had proposed to the Soviet government a treaty of non-aggression and friendship, and that the Soviet government had decided to accept, and was about to sign the treaty. He insisted that he was convinced that the present Yugoslav government fully intended to abide by its declaration that it would continue to adhere to the Three Power Alliance, and he therefore saw no reason why the German government should be displeased.<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet action has not yet been sufficiently explained. It is clear that it was intended as a reminder to Berlin that Moscow was interested in the Balkan peninsula. But it is too much to assume that Moscow was deliberately encouraging Yugoslavia

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 317.

to stand up to the Axis, and still less arguable that because Gavrilović was Anglophile and his proposal was accepted by the Kremlin, therefore Soviet policy was taking an Anglophile turn. Molotov of course did not know when he signed the pact that the Germans were going to attack Yugoslavia two days later. The information was communicated to him early on 6 April, some hours after the first German bombs had fallen on Belgrade.

It can be argued that the Simović government was by no means so solidly or so resolutely anti-Axis as has been commonly assumed, and when Molotov told Schulenburg that he did not regard it as anti-German he may have been sincere. But Hitler was taking no chances. The Axis had already once been disappointed by changes of government in Belgrade—in February 1939, when Stojadinović, on whose devotion to the Axis German and Italian Balkan policy was largely based, had been dismissed by Prince Paul. Now by great diplomatic effort they had brought Yugoslavia to the point of signing the Three Power Alliance, and the Premier and Foreign Minister who had signed, together with the Prince Regent himself, were overthrown. Whatever may have been the diplomatic intentions of the Simović government, the act of 27 March was treated by Hitler as a slap in the face, and he reacted accordingly. And when the Germans marched against Yugoslavia, striking simultaneously from Austria, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, and joining up through Macedonia with the Italians in Albania, the Soviet government did not even make a gesture in favour of its new friend.

Three other friendship treaties of Yugoslavia were also casualties—with Bulgaria (1937), Italy (1937) and Hungary (1940). The Hungarian Premier, Count Paul Teleki, was most unwilling to let the Germans through, but Regent Horthy consented, and the General Staff, in which German influence had long been extremely strong, insisted. Teleki, unable to change the course of events, committed suicide. Yugoslav resistance collapsed in a few days, and the German attack on Greece was also quickly successful. It was completed by the fall of Crete in May.

Turkey, which was a member of the Balkan Entente of 1934 and had in October 1939 signed a treaty with Britain and France despite Soviet pressure, remained neutral in the Balkan campaign. An attack by a Balkan state (Bulgaria or Albania) on her Balkan Entente co-signatories (Yugoslavia, Greece or Rumania) in association with another Power obliged Turkey to go to war. However, Bulgaria had not formally declared war on either

country, and had not taken part in military operations, so it could be argued that the *casus foederis* had not arisen. Turkey's desire to remain at peace with Bulgaria had been shown by the Turco-Bulgarian declaration of 17th February.

Turkey's inaction was a disappointment to her Balkan friends. But in the light of subsequent events the Allies had reason to be grateful. If Turkey had gone to war with Germany in 1941, it is obvious that the German forces would have been able to advance through Anatolia. In view of the strength of Germany's influence at this time in both Syria and Iraq, it is probable that Egypt, and so the whole Mediterranean, would have been lost to Britain. Hitler would also have had to postpone his invasion of Russia for a year, and so would have concentrated his forces against Britain. Thus it may be argued that Turkey's neutrality saved Britain from still greater peril.

German diplomacy made great efforts to win over Turkey. In March 1941 the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin was informed of Soviet aims in the Straits, as stated by Molotov during his Berlin conversations.<sup>1</sup> Turkey was, however, anxious to avoid being drawn into the coming German-Soviet conflict. On 25 March 1941 a joint Turco-Soviet declaration was published. It stated that reports in the foreign press that if Turkey were led to enter the war the Soviet Union would attack her, 'in no way correspond to the position of the U.S.S.R.' Turkey could in the event of war 'count on the full understanding and neutrality of the U.S.S.R.', and the U.S.S.R. on Turkish neutrality. In fact, however, Turkish neutrality in a German-Soviet war was of greater advantage to Germany than to the Soviet Union, for it removed any land threat to the German south-east flank and prevented any British attempt to force the Aegean and bring help to Russia through the Black Sea. In June 1941 a German-Turkish non-aggression pact was signed, a few days before the German troops invaded Russia. It was an undoubted success for German diplomacy and a blow to the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders had brought it on themselves by their bullying of Turkey in 1939 and their greed in the German-Soviet conversations of November 1940.

At the last moment the Soviet government had vainly attempted to appease Hitler. On 28 April the German Ambassador Schulenburg personally expressed to Hitler the opinion that the Soviet leaders had no hostile intentions towards Germany, and were

<sup>1</sup> See article in *Foreign Affairs*, New York, April 1949, by the Turkish Foreign Minister, Necmeddin Sadak, entitled 'Turkey faces the Soviets.'

rejecting all advice offered by the British.<sup>1</sup> On 6 May Stalin himself for the first time took the office of Prime Minister. Schulenburg interpreted this as a supreme effort to improve German-Soviet relations by giving all his personal prestige to the work of conciliation. Evidence of this was the expulsion from Moscow of the legations of Belgium, Norway and Yugoslavia (with which only one month earlier Stalin himself had signed a treaty of friendship), the decision to establish diplomatic relations with the pro-German government of Rashid Ali in Iraq, and proposals for further German-Soviet economic co-operation.<sup>2</sup>

But all this appeasement was too late. German military plans had gone too far. The Rumanians<sup>3</sup> and Finns had been taken into German confidence and troops were disposed for the attack. Perhaps the finally decisive factor was Hitler's personal hatred of both Russia and communism, which he had with increasing difficulty suppressed during the preceding months. Stalin's last pathetic gesture, the incredible Tass communiqué of 14 June denying any deterioration in German-Soviet relations, was a failure. On the 129th anniversary of Napoleon's invasion, the German army crossed the Soviet border.<sup>4</sup> The Second World War entered an utterly new phase.

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 330-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 336-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Trial of the Major German War Criminals*, Part 6, pp. 273-4.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of the atmosphere in Soviet official and diplomatic circles in Moscow in these days, see Gafencu, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-13.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE AXIS NEW ORDER

THE first East European country occupied by the Germans was Czechoslovakia. This is not the place to discuss the provinces annexed by Germany under the Munich agreement, which were incorporated in the Third Reich and shared its fate until the end of the war, or Slovakia, which from its proclamation of 'independence' in March 1939 until the rising of September 1944 was not governed directly by the Germans. The following description applies only to the 'Protectorate Bohemia-Moravia', the mutilated Czech lands.

In the Protectorate there were two authorities, German and Czech, the latter subordinate to the former.<sup>1</sup> Hitler's representative was the Reich Protector. From April 1939 to September 1941 this office was held by Baron von Neurath, former Reich Foreign Minister. Immediately under him was the State Secretary, K. H. Frank, a former leader of Henlein's Sudeten German Party, who was also chief of the German police and S.S. in the Protectorate. The Protector's office had a number of departments, called Gruppen, corresponding to the Czech ministries. In each ministry there was a German delegation representing the corresponding Gruppe. The delegation supervised the ministry's work and intervened when it wished in the appointment of personnel. There was also in the Czech Premier's office a Co-ordinating Committee, which was the chief link between the Czech government and the Protector's Office. The Czech Minister of the Interior and Czech police were subordinated to K. H. Frank through a German liaison officer appointed by him. Provincial authorities were supervised by nineteen German provincial officers, the Oberlandräte. The old Czechoslovak army was disbanded, and a government militia numbering some 7,000 fulfilled only ceremonial functions. The Czech President, Dr. Emil Hacha, was a powerless ceremonial figure. German army units were of course stationed in the Protectorate in sufficient numbers

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed description of the Protectorate regime up to the beginning of 1942, see Shiela Grant Duff, *A German Protectorate: the Czechs under Nazi Rule*.

to ensure German supremacy. There were two systems of law-courts, German and Czech. Czechs came under German law in all cases arising out of the German Criminal Code, in all cases where one party to a dispute was a German, and in all cases arising out of any action committed on official German premises.

The class which suffered most from this regime was the intelligentsia. It was a deliberate aim of German policy to deprive the Czech nation of its brains. On 28 October 1939, the anniversary of national independence, there was a small demonstration in Prague. German troops fired on the crowd and one man was killed. At this man's funeral university students organised a protest demonstration. The Germans then arrested a number of students at their homes, shot nine of them, and closed the Czech universities. The numbers of Czech secondary schools were also reduced, and during the years of occupation the compulsory use of the German language was repeatedly extended to new fields. Among Czechs arrested for crimes against the Reich, or as hostages, members of the intelligentsia were very numerous. The middle class as a whole, including shopkeepers and public officials, suffered both economically and physically under the German regime. The rest of the population fared better. The Germans made efforts to win over the industrial workers, and were not entirely unsuccessful. The much-vaunted National Socialist welfare organisation made some impression. During the Nazi-Soviet alliance, the Germans profited from the anti-western attitude of the communists. After June 1941 of course communists were fiercely persecuted, but workers who kept out of politics enjoyed full employment and comparatively good wages. The allied bombardments of Germany caused industry to be transferred to the Protectorate. The peasants too enjoyed tolerable material conditions. In the last part of the war many did well out of the black market.

The Czechs were allowed a single political organisation, the National Co-operation (*Narodní Souručení*). It was dominated by reactionaries, including some people who had been active in the old Agrarian Party. In May 1939 it was allowed to hold a plebiscite, at which it received, in approved totalitarian style, 99.25 per cent of the votes. Its programme was strongly nationalist, Christian, mildly anti-liberal and strongly anti-socialist. It was treated with suspicion by the few convinced Czech fascists, led by General Gajda, and by the Germans themselves. In the summer of 1940 two of its local branches were dissolved for hostility to the

Reich, and its Executive Committee was reorganised. In May 1941 there was a further purge, and a certain Fousek, chairman of the Society for Collaboration with the Germans, was appointed its president. In the next few months it was thoroughly purged, and became simply an instrument for the propagation of Nazism. In its earlier years it had been tolerated by many patriotic Czechs, who considered it a means of keeping the Czech national spirit alive: now it was obviously a tool of the enemy.

In the autumn of 1941 German repression became suddenly more severe. In September there were big explosions at a munitions works and a power station. On 28 September Reinhold Heydrich, the head, under Himmler, of the Security Police of the whole Reich, was appointed Protector. A state of emergency was proclaimed, there were many arrests and executions. Among those arrested was the Czech Premier himself, General Eliaš, who was accused of conspiring against the Reich in agreement with the Czech exiles. For eight months Heydrich conducted a regime of terror, with firing-squads, concentration camps and deportations to forced labour. On 26 May 1942 a bomb was thrown at his car by a Czech who had been dropped by parachute from a British plane, with instructions from the Czechoslovak government in exile to execute the Protector. A week later Heydrich died from his wounds. This was the signal for the worst reign of terror yet experienced in the Czech lands. A state of emergency was again proclaimed, personal documents were checked all over the country and strict curfew regulations imposed. The S.S. General Daluge took over Heydrich's powers. Lidice, a mining village near Kladno with 1,500-2,000 inhabitants, was destroyed, all its male adults executed and its women and children deported. Two weeks later the village of Lezaky, thirty miles north-east of Prague, with 100 people, suffered the same fate.<sup>1</sup> In both villages it was believed that the assassins of Heydrich had received help. By the end of July about 1,300 persons more had been executed. Only at the end of August was the state of emergency formally concluded, Daluge's mission declared ended, and Frick, a former Reich Minister of Interior, appointed Protector. The last years of the German regime were perhaps somewhat milder. But the hatred of the Czech people for the Germans did not diminish. In the government of Dr. Krejčí, who had succeeded the arrested Eliaš

<sup>1</sup> It is of course true that Yugoslavia, Greece, Poland, Albania and north Italy had many Lidices. The death-roll of the Czechs was lower than that of other conquered peoples. But this in no way lessens the horror of the crime.

(executed in May 1942), the most important and most detested minister was Colonel Moravec, Minister of Education. A former Czechoslovak General Staff Officer with pro-western sympathies, he had decided after Munich to embrace the German cause, and was the most enthusiastic exponent of the Nazi ideology. In January 1945 Krejčí was replaced by Bienert, a professional bureaucrat of colourless character. Moravec kept his post.

It might seem from this account that, apart from the savagery of the eleven months' terror of Heydrich and Daluge, the German regime in the Protectorate, though oppressive, was not utterly intolerable. But the full horror of the Nazi regime becomes clear from the documents produced at the Nürnberg trial, showing the German long-term plans for the country. An official conference held in the Protector's Office on 9 October 1940 considered three possible 'solutions for the Czech problem'. The first, to germanise Moravia and leave a 'residual Bohemia' as a Czech island, was rejected as inadequate. The second, deportation of all Czechs, was rejected as not practicable 'within a reasonable period of time'. The third solution, recommended by the conference and subsequently chosen by the Führer, was to assimilate half the Czech population and to eliminate the other half 'by all sorts of methods'. Elimination applied particularly to 'the racially Mongoloid part and to the major part of the intellectual class'.<sup>1</sup> Only bomb damage to industry in the Reich, and shortage of labour throughout Nazi-held Europe, made it necessary to treat the Czech workers and peasants more mildly as long as the war lasted. If the Germans had won, this fantastic plan would have been carried out.

The German regime in Poland resembled that in the Czech lands, but was much severer. Western Poland was incorporated in the Reich, in two Gaus—Danzig and the Warthegau. The territory thus annexed was considerably larger than the Polish territory held by Prussia from 1795 to 1918. It included even the great textile centre Lodz, which was renamed Litzmannstadt. The rest of Poland up to the Molotov-Ribbentrop demarcation line received the name General Government. After the Germans invaded Russia, Eastern Galicia, which had been Austrian up to 1918, was incorporated in the General Government, but the rest of the territory of Poland ceded to the U.S.S.R. in 1939 was kept separate, as part of Nazi-occupied Russia.

In the Warthegau and Danzig areas, all available industrial

<sup>1</sup> *Trial of the Major German War Criminals* (hereafter referred to as *Trial*), part 2, pp. 436-7.

and agricultural resources were to be fully exploited and expanded for the benefit of the Reich. At the same time the population was to be germanised. Jews and the most intractable Poles, especially members of the intelligentsia, were deported to the General Government. Large numbers of able-bodied male Poles were deported to other parts of the Reich to work in factories or fields. This served not only to provide the German war economy with labour, but also, to quote a confidential report of the Academy of German Law dated January 1940,<sup>1</sup> to 'hamper the native biological propagation' of the Poles. Polish workers employed in the Reich were compelled to wear a yellow badge with the initial 'P' marked on it. Their pay and rations were considerably lower than those of German workers. Poles remaining in the annexed territories did not receive German nationality, but were declared by a decree of 12 December 1940 to be 'protected persons'.

Former Polish subjects from these territories who were of German origin received privileges. This applied not only to members of the acknowledged pre-1939 German minority, but to those who could be 'reclaimed for Germanism' though they had hitherto considered themselves Poles. The task of 'regermanisation' was placed under the personal direction of the Reich S.S. leader Himmler, who received the title of Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of Germanism. By a decree of 12 September 1940 Himmler inaugurated a 'Racial Register', which classified persons deemed to be of German extraction. Persons belonging to one of these categories who considered themselves Poles, and did not apply for entry in the 'German ethnical list' were sent to concentration camps.

The Polish language was not permitted in administration or schools within the annexed territories. As a centre for the propagation of German culture, a German university was opened in Poznan in April 1941. Finally it was intended to settle German farmers, workers and officials in large number on the property seized from Poles or Jews. This part of the programme was not fully carried out, as the continuance of the war made it necessary to use German manpower in the armed forces and the factories. Nevertheless the systematic policy of deportation, confiscation, regermanisation and settlement of Germans had made its mark on these provinces by the end of the war.

The General Government on the other hand was to be left to stagnate. All raw materials and industrial installations useful to

<sup>1</sup> *Trial*, part 2, p. 425.

the German economy were to be removed to the Reich. Only such enterprises should be left as were 'absolutely necessary for the mere maintenance of the naked existence of the population'. In the words of Governor-General Hans Frank, 'Poland shall be treated as a colony; the Poles shall be the slaves of the Greater German World Empire'.<sup>1</sup> This policy was not fully carried out, as in the later years of the war it was found convenient to use industrial plant inside the General Government as it was less accessible to Western bombers. But the ultimate intention was certainly to make the territory an agricultural colony. It was realised by German experts that this policy, together with mass deportations of unreliable Poles from the areas annexed to the Reich, would create a condition of 'double over-population'.<sup>2</sup> The Germans in fact never seem to have made up their minds exactly what was to be done with the General Government. By a decree of January 1942 its inhabitants were declared 'stateless persons'. Himmler spoke of future heavy German colonisation along the rivers San and Bug, so as to encircle the Polish population. In the winter of 1942-3 there were mass evictions of Polish peasants in the Lublin area, and settlement of Germans began. But the opposition of the population, led by the Home Army, and the many other pressing tasks of the war, prevented a systematic application of the policy.

The administration of the General Government resembled that of the Protectorate, with the important difference that there was not even a puppet Polish government. The Poles are rightly proud of the fact that in their country there was no quisling government. But without in any way detracting from the heroic patriotism of the Poles it must be said that the Germans themselves seem never to have considered creating such a government. The traditional Prussian hatred of the Poles, reinforced by Nazi racial ideas, and completed by rage that an 'inferior' race should have dared to thwart the will of Greater Germany, required that the Poles should be treated more mercilessly than the Czechs or any other subject people.

At the head of the General Government was the Governor, the former Reich Minister of Justice, Hans Frank. Under him were the State Secretary and an Office with twelve Chief Sections corresponding to Reich Ministries.<sup>3</sup> Under the General Govern-

<sup>1</sup> *Trial*, part 2, p. 423.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Bühler, *Das Generalgouvernement. seine Verwaltung und seine Wirtschaft* (Cracow 1943). Bühler was State-Secretary under General-Governor Hans Frank, and the book is a series of lectures by himself and senior officials of his staff.

ment Office were four provincial governors, each of whom had an office with corresponding departments. Below the four governors were sixty-four district and city heads (Hauptleute). The police were subject to the 'S.S. and Police Leader', who appears to have been responsible partly to the Governor-General and partly, over his head, directly to Himmler. Apart from regular S.S. and Gestapo personnel, there was an auxiliary police force recruited from the 100,000 German minority in the General Government, known as the Sonderdienst. It was formed in May 1940 and was placed under the district and city heads. Its duties included enforcement of deliveries by the peasants, collection of taxes, price supervision, measures against the black market, and the security of the railways. Under the orders of the German police were the Polish police, who numbered some 25,000. The system of law courts was extremely complicated. As in the Protectorate, there were German and local courts. All crimes against the Reich, or against Germans, or in which Germans were involved, were handled by German courts. Severe crimes, or crimes causing public disturbance, involving only Poles, could nevertheless be brought before German courts if the German prosecutor's department (Staatsanwaltschaft) so decided. The department of justice in the General-Governor's or provincial offices could instruct a German higher court (Obergericht) to examine verdicts passed in Polish courts if it considered this in the public interest. Apart from the regular German and Polish courts, there were Military Courts, Special Courts and Police Courts-Martial, dealing with various forms of treason to the German authority.

The outbreak of war with Russia made little difference to German treatment of Poles. It was too late to try to win over a nation which had been so oppressed and insulted. Polish manpower became more urgently needed. In August 1941 there was a fuller mobilisation in the annexed provinces. Those who had been accepted in the Racial Register and so received German citizenship were called up to the armed forces. Others were conscripted into auxiliary labour forces. In the General Government in May 1942 a form of compulsory labour service, under military discipline, called Baudienst, was introduced for all non-Jewish inhabitants between eighteen and sixty years of age who were not German subjects. In February 1943 Frank made an appeal to inhabitants of the General Government to register as 'Volksdeutsche' and join the armed forces in the fight against Bolshevism. But neither the privileges thereby attainable nor the

appeal to traditional Polish distrust of Russia were able to attract many volunteers. Prominent Poles would not give their co-operation to the Germans. The advisory committee of Poles under Count Roneker, and of Ukrainians under Professor Kubytowicz, set up by Frank,<sup>1</sup> were ineffective and unrepresentative bodies. By 1944, when the Soviet advance threatened the German position in Poland, the Polish nation was too full of hatred, and the Polish resistance movement was too well organised, for reconciliation with the Germans to be conceivable on either side.

A special chapter of horror in the German occupation of Poland is the mass extermination of the Jews. The concentration camps of Oświęcim and Majdanek became centres for the murder of the Jewish population not only of Poland, but of a large part of Central Europe and Western Russia. According to the German Security Service official Wilhelm Höttl,<sup>2</sup> more than four million Jews met their deaths in the camps. The enormity of this crime is probably without precedent in history.

German occupation policy in the Balkan peninsula, with the exception of eastern Slovenia, was not aimed, as in Czechoslovakia and Poland, at germanisation of whole territories. The South Slavs and Greeks were to be allowed to exist as nations. But the regime was not in practice less horrible.

The partition of Yugoslavia gave half of Slovenia to Germany. In this territory a policy of germanisation was introduced. Numbers of Slovenes fled or were deported to the Italian zone or to Serbia. Those who remained were deprived of the use of their language in public or in schools. German Austrians were brought in and Slovene property was confiscated on a large scale.

The rest of Slovenia was annexed by Italy. Fascist administration and military occupation were oppressive, but the Slovene language and nationality were not persecuted as such to the same extent as in the German zone. Hungary took the rich Danube province of Bačka, and the small districts of Medjumurje and Prekomurje in the north-west. The old denationalising policy pursued by Budapest before 1918 was revived with an added fascist flavour. The Banat was placed under a special administration with the local German minority as the privileged element, supplying most of the police and administration. Macedonia was annexed by Bulgaria, which also applied a denationalising policy. There was to be no nonsense about Macedonian autonomy: the people of the liberated province were Bulgarians, and would be

<sup>1</sup> *Trial*, part 12, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, part 2, p. 417.

treated as such. The western fringe of Macedonia, and the province of Kosovo in the south-west of Serbia, were incorporated in Italian Albania. Their population was in fact mainly Albanian. Montenegro was made into an autonomous state under Italian administration. On the Dalmatian coast Italy annexed a number of islands and several strips of mainland, including the ports of Split, Dubrovnik and Kotor. Italian troops also occupied a large zone of the interior of Hercegovina, Bosnia and Croatia.

There remained, as a rump of the old Yugoslavia, the two residual states of Croatia and Serbia. As the Axis Powers believed, not without reason, that the *coup d'état* of 27 March 1941 had been principally the work of Serbs, they regarded the Serbs as their main enemies and favoured the Croats. The age-old dream of the Croatian nationalists seemed to be achieved. They had their own state. So delighted were they that they incorporated the word 'independent' in the title of the new state, hoping perhaps that this would guarantee its reality. Probably the most obstinate, fanatical and rhetorical hair-splitters in Europe, the Zagreb nationalist lawyers indulged a spate of eloquence. But when it came to the settlement of their frontiers their emotions were mixed. In the East, the Axis backed them against Serbia. The Drina became their frontier, and all Bosnia and Hercegovina, with nearly 50 per cent Serbs and 30 per cent Moslems, were included in Croatia. In the north they had to make minor cessions to Hungary. But the bitter blow was the loss to Italy of most of Dalmatia. It destroyed most of the goodwill which the Croatian nationalist leaders had felt for Italy, which had given them refuge and training as terrorists and conspirators. Even the decision to offer the crown of the Kingdom of Croatia to an Italian prince did not smooth over the resentment. The Duke of Spoleto never visited his kingdom.

The Croatian nationalist leader Pavelić set up a fascist state. Side by side with his regular army, the Domobran, which was based on conscription and sent a few units to serve on the Russian front, there were the armed formations of the Ustash,<sup>1</sup> which corresponded to the German S.S. The Ustash organisation was founded by Pavelić as an underground conspiratorial movement in the reign of King Alexander. Its members were indoctrinated first with the Italian and then with the German brand of fascism.

<sup>1</sup> I have used the anglicised form Ustash throughout. In the original Serbo-Croat, the word is spelt *Ustaša* in the singular and *Ustaše* in the plural. Its original meaning is 'insurgent'.

It was the Ustash bands which organised the massacres of Serbs and Jews, which among the atrocities of Hitler's Europe were surpassed only by the extermination camps in Poland. The Croatian masses had for so long heard from their leaders that 'independence' would solve all their troubles, and had so genuine a dislike of the Greater Serb dictatorial policy pursued by Belgrade governments up to 1939, and only slightly modified by the August 1939 agreement, that at first they greeted the Pavelić government. The Croatian Peasant Party's attitude was uncertain. Some members of its right wing had always sympathised with the Ustash, and now formally went over to them. Its left wing was definitely opposed. Maček himself retired from politics, but at first he and his closest colleagues advised the Croatian people to obey the new government. Only after its atrocities had disgusted decent Croats, and the resistance which they provoked brought the greater part of the country to anarchy, did the great majority of the old party's national and local leaders definitely turn against the regime. But their opposition consisted for the first two years in nothing more than grumbling.

In Serbia the Germans at first seem to have intended a regime of occupation, without any Serbian authority. But the revolt of July 1941 alarmed them, and if they were not to divert large numbers of troops from the Eastern Front, it was worth their while to enlist some Serbian support for the preservation of order. They therefore in August persuaded General Milan Nedić to form a government 'of national salvation'. Nedić considered himself the temporary representative of the exiled King Peter until the war was over. He was allowed to form a small military force called the Serbian State Guard. In addition to this, there were 'legal' Chetnik units, led by the official head of the Yugoslav Chetnik organisation, Kosta Pećanac, who at about the same time offered his collaboration to the Germans. A further military force were the followers of Ljotić, the leader of the small Serbian fascist party. The process by which Nedić, who started out with patriotic intentions, became a puppet of the Germans, and the relations between Nedić and the 'illegal' Chetniks led by Draža Mihailović, whom the exiled king and government recognised as their official representative at home, will be described in a later chapter.

The occupation of Yugoslavia inevitably led to friction between the two Axis partners. In the summer of 1939 Hitler and Ribbentrop had told Ciano that Yugoslavia, as a Mediterranean country,

belonged definitely to the Italian sphere. But in practice, even if they had intended to fulfil this promise, they would have been unable to do so. If Dalmatia, Montenegro and the Slovene hinterland were Mediterranean lands, the valleys of the Drava, Sava, Danube, and Morava belonged to Central Europe, and the railways passing along these valleys linked the Reich with Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece. They were thus important both for trade (especially for chrome supplies from Turkey and from Bulgarian-occupied Macedonia) and for communications with the fronts in Africa (Peiraeus) and Russia (Varna, Burgas and the sea route to Crimea and Sea of Azov). Therefore Germany was bound to take a direct interest both in Serbia and in the new Croatian state. At the same time the Croatian nationalists, embittered by the loss of so much of Dalmatia, preferred Germany to Italy. Pavelić himself seems to have preserved some sense of gratitude to Mussolini for past services, but his close colleague Colonel Slavko Kvaternik, whom he made a Marshal and Minister of War, was much more pro-German than pro-Italian. Kvaternik had been an officer of the Austro-Hungarian army. In him, and in many other humbler Croat nationalists, Hitler the Austrian was able to exploit the old loyalty to Vienna. The commander of the German troops in Croatia was Glaise-Horstenau, once an Austrian general, who considered himself a friend of the Croats and was certainly an enemy of the Italians. But more important was the German minister in Zagreb, a Nazi and an S.A. officer, Kasche, who dominated the Pavelić government.

The Axis occupation of Yugoslavia was thus complicated by friction between three forces—Italian policy, German military policy and German Nazi Party and Gestapo policy.

Italian policy had for years supported Croatian nationalism against Yugoslavia, which meant in practice against Serbian nationalism. Now, aware of the anger and 'revisionism' of the Croatian nationalists, who were determined to get Dalmatia back, the Italian authorities began to protect the Serbs. Serbian Chetnik bands were used by them first against Croat raiders from Pavelić's territory, and then against the communist partisans. Italy had no real quarrel with the Serbs. She objected only to the existence of a large South Slav state. While this state existed, between the World Wars, she had sought to undermine it, and as it was dominated by Serb nationalists she had used against it the Croat nationalists who were discontented. But Italy's own territorial claims were directed

against Croatian, not Serbian, territory. As the Croat nationalists were not content with the status of a land-locked vassal of Italy, the Italian authorities inclined towards co-operation with the Serbs, and began to think in terms of a division of territory between Italy and Greater Serbia.

On the other hand, the Germans, who since the formation of the Berlin-Rome Axis had on the whole damped down Italian ardour against Yugoslavia, and had for long believed that the Serb-dominated Yugoslavia could be won over as a whole for the Axis cause, were now the implacable enemies of the Serbs who on 27 March 1941 had dared to defy the Greater Reich. They therefore came forward as patrons of the Croats. They especially objected to the Italian flirtation with Mihailović in the first months of 1943. On the other hand the German military commanders on the spot were less anti-Serb and less pro-Croat than the Nazi leaders in Berlin or the representatives of the Sicherheitsdienst in Yugoslavia. They had no objection to local co-operation, against the Partisan forces, with local Serb Chetnik units, even if the commanders of those units theoretically recognised as their chief Mihailović, the official representatives of the enemy Yugoslav government in exile. Thus, at a time when Hitler was writing angrily to Mussolini urging him to break with the Chetniks, individual Wehrmacht commanders were conducting operations against Partisans in co-ordination with Chetniks.<sup>1</sup>

The surrender of Italy in 1943 to some extent relieved the Germans of embarrassment. As obligations towards Italy were cancelled by Victor Emmanuel's 'treachery', Pavelić could be allowed to annex the Italian pieces of Dalmatian coast and islands. All Slovenia was annexed to the Reich, which also set up a Trieste Gau as part of the Third Reich. In Albania, where there were good memories of old Austria-Hungary for Hitler to inherit, the Germans appeared as liberators from the Italian yoke. But even now it was not possible to work out a consistent German policy for Yugoslavia. There had been several signs that Croatia was not reliable. In October 1942 Pavelić had removed the reliably pro-German Kvaternik from his post. In 1943 Pavelić began to negotiate with the Croatian Peasant Party. The deputy of Maček, the engineer Košutić, refused the offer, but the fact that it had been made annoyed Berlin. In the summer of 1944 Pavelić's

<sup>1</sup> See the Mussolini-Hitler correspondence (*Hitler e Mussolini*, Rizzoli, 1946), pp. 132-6, 142-3, 156-9; Donosti, *Mussolini e l'Europa*, p. 271; and Clissold, *Whirlwind*, pp. 117-33. Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*, gives a general picture in chapters 17 and 18 of German-Italian relations in occupied Europe.

Foreign Minister, Lorković, plotted to bring Croatia over to the Allies, but his conspiracy was discovered by Pavelić and he himself was executed. In spite of these waverings, and of the fact that by now most of the territory of Pavelić's 'state' was held by Tito's Partisans, Kasche, the German Minister in Zagreb, appears to have supported the Croatian cause. On the other hand a German official of equal if not higher status, Neubacher (another Austrian), who had a general mission with ministerial rank on Hitler's behalf in the whole Balkan peninsula, strongly supported the Serbian nationalists. Thus, assumption of power by the Germans over the whole of Yugoslavia had not solved the contradictions. It had merely created a pro-Serb and a pro-Croat party within the German government machine.

The occupation of Greece had also led to German-Italian friction. The political representatives of the two Powers, the Italian diplomat Ghigi and the German commissar Altenburg, were often in disagreement. At the time of Greece's surrender, the Italians were detested and despised by all Greeks, whereas there was no hatred for the Germans except among conscious anti-fascists.<sup>1</sup> But soon opinion changed. The Germans ruthlessly exploited what economic resources there were, and progressively ruined the Greek economy by their exorbitant demands for payment of occupation costs. They also failed to take precautions for feeding the people until famine was imminent. The Italians at least attempted a more humane policy. Ghigi supported the pleas of the quisling Finance Minister Gotzamanis to Mussolini when the Duce visited Athens in July 1942. Mussolini even wrote to Hitler and asked that something should be done, but without any effect. In 1941 the greater part of Greece was occupied by the Italians, but there were German garrisons in Athens and Salonica and the Germans held the Aegean Islands and Crete. Bulgaria annexed Greek Thrace. After September 1943 the Germans took over most of the Italian zone, but in the north the Bulgarian zone was extended from Thrace to include eastern Macedonia. Both before and after the Italian armistice, Greece had a quisling government. Like the Serb general Nedić, the Greek quislings had hoped to protect their country's interests, but the development of the resistance movement inside Greece and of the war outside forced them into the position of puppets. The German authorities showed ever less consideration for them.

<sup>1</sup> For an Italian view of Greek reactions to Italian and German occupation, see Donosti, *Mussolini e l'Europa*, pp. 272-4.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE AXIS SATELLITES

WHILE the greater part of Eastern Europe was directly occupied by the Axis Powers or ruled by puppet governments set up by the Axis, three states—Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria—were willing allies of the Axis in its war against Russia or the West. The state which made the greatest contribution to the Axis war effort was Rumania, which in 1940 was deprived of large territories by Axis pressure. Rumania was also the first to break with the Axis. By doing so she opened the way to the Red Army into Central Europe. Considerable Rumanian forces also fought in the last stage of the war on the Russian side against the Germans. Hungary's contribution was much smaller, but she remained in the Axis camp longer. This was due not to enthusiasm of either her government or her people, but to her unfortunate geographical position. An open plain immediately adjoining German (Austrian) territory, she was at the mercy of the German army. She made an abortive attempt to get out of the war in the winter of 1943, and again in the autumn of 1944, but on both occasions German counter-action was too swift and too powerful. Thus Hungary felt the full fury of battle right across her lands and especially in her great capital Budapest. The third ally, Bulgaria, came out of the war much more lightly. Her contribution consisted only in garrisoning Balkan territories conquered for her by the Germans, of which a large part she was able to annex. Military operations against Yugoslav Partisans did not exact a heavy toll. She never declared war on Russia. She came comfortably out of the war after King Michael of Rumania, taking real risks, had opened the south-eastern front. Her armies then fought on the Russian side for seven months. The casualties thus suffered were far greater than those resulting from any action against the Allies, but they were still not large. The present chapter will consider the three Allies of the Axis in turn.

#### RUMANIA

The government formed after the abdication of King Carol II in September 1940 was of mixed composition. It represented a

compromise between the old ruling class and the semi-revolutionary Iron Guard. At its head was a general of the regular army, Ion Antonescu. Finance was held by a liberal banker, Crețianu. The Iron Guard's leader, Horia Sima, was Vice-Premier. Lip service was paid to Nazi ideology in its Iron Guardist version. Bands of youths marched up and down the streets of Bucarest clad in green shirts singing 'legionary' songs.<sup>1</sup> The ghost of 'the Captain', Codreanu, was constantly invoked. Antonescu himself put on a green shirt, and had himself called the 'Leader'—'Conducător' in Rumanian, a translation of 'Führer'.

But relations between the two sections of the government were never good. The Guard did not trust Antonescu, nor he them. The young fascist idealists of the Guard really wanted to make a social revolution. They took seriously the slogans about land reform ('one man, one acre'), cleaning up corruption, and elimination of Jews. They were not content to go on with the old administration and the old distribution of wealth. The Guard also wanted its revenge on those who at Carol's orders had massacred their leaders in 1938-9. Finally it contained a large number of more or less criminal types who simply wanted loot. In November Guardists massacred political prisoners in Jilava jail, including several generals. At the end of the month they murdered two distinguished professors who had also played a big part in Rumanian politics, the historian Iorga and the economist Madgearu. Throughout the winter there were outrages against Jews. Chaos reached a climax at the end of January 1941. Antonescu decided to suppress the Guard with the help of the regular army. After a few days' street-fighting in Bucarest the job was thoroughly done. During the fighting Guardists had carried out mass robberies and had committed horrible atrocities on Jews. Some Guardists were killed fighting, others were executed, others escaped to Axis countries.

German troops had entered Rumania in October 1940. At first there were only large technical missions to train the Rumanian army. As Mussolini's difficulties in Greece increased, German troops poured into Rumania, in order in due course to pass through Bulgaria to attack Greece. But the Germans were neutral

<sup>1</sup> The Iron Guard changed its name several times during its career. At one time it was called 'Legion of the Archangel Michael'. Members of the Guard became known as 'legionaries'. The 'bible' of the Iron Guard was Codreanu's book *Pentru legionari* ('For legionaries'). The invocation of the Archangel Michael seems to have been taken from the Russian 'black hundreds', bands of anti-semitic toughs who flourished especially in the provinces bordering on Rumania in 1905-7, and made frequent use of the archangel's name.

in the Antonescu-Guardist fighting. When Antonescu had won, the Germans backed him. The Guard had been more an embarrassment than a help. It was ideologically more loyal than Antonescu, but it was a wild rabble. Hitler needed a disciplined regime in Rumania, for he had a job for the Rumanian army in the East. But Guardist refugees found hospitality in Germany: one could never tell when they might be needed.

After the suppression of the Guard Rumania settled down to a respectable military dictatorship. Antonescu's subsequent cabinets all had a military character. The old bureaucracy remained, there were no experiments in social reform, and the interests of business men, large landowners and prosperous peasants were well protected. The Rumanian ruling class was well content with the regime. The Jews who had survived the massacre were not on the whole badly treated. They suffered personal indignities, and were forced to do what work the authorities dictated. By Western democratic standards it was oppression, but in Hitler's Europe it was not intolerable. In fact in very many cases Jews were humanely treated. Antonescu's aim was to avoid unnecessary confusion, and to concentrate all on orderly and efficient conduct of the coming war with Russia. In this he had a good deal of popular support. Though most Rumanians knew little of Bessarabia and South Bukovina, they had resented their annexation. Victorious war on Hitler's side would restore them. Some also hoped—and Antonescu was one of them—that if Rumania made a better war effort than Hungary, Hitler would reward her by giving back the northern part of Transylvania which on Axis pressure she had ceded to Hungary in August 1940. The democratic leaders of the National Peasant Party, Maniu and Mihalache, were sceptical about the last point, and they always preferred the Western Powers to the Axis. But both supported the war against Russia for reconquest of Bessarabia. Mihalache even volunteered for the front. When the Rumanian armies had at all points reached the Dniestr, however, Maniu declared that further participation in the war would be aggression against Russia. The National Peasant leaders then opposed, though without much vigour, the war. Antonescu ignored their protests, but treated them with courtesy. They remained at liberty, and Maniu and Antonescu even from time to time exchanged long-winded letters on the military or political situation.

Rumania's war effort was substantial. In 1941 about thirty

divisions were used. The Rumanians played an important part in the siege of Odessa. With German permission, Antonescu not only recovered Bessarabia and North Bukovina, but incorporated in Rumania the large territory between the Dniestr and the Bug, including Odessa itself. This territory received the title 'Transnistria'. In return for these gains the Rumanians were obliged to continue fighting at Hitler's side. The hope of recovering part or all of North Transylvania was still dangled before them, but without any definite promise. The siege of Sevastopol and the conquest of the Crimea were largely the work of the Rumanians. During the winter of 1941-2 a large part of the Rumanian army was withdrawn, but in the summer of 1942 it was again increased. Some fifteen divisions took part in the offensive towards Stalingrad, and their losses were heavy. In 1943 the Rumanian Third Army was kept in the Crimea, but elsewhere there were only a few small garrisons. The Rumanian government resisted pressure from the Germans to increase its military help. Only when the Red Army entered Rumanian territory in 1944 were the forces brought up to some twenty divisions. Apart from military help, Rumania was of great economic value to Germany. Her most important resource was of course the oil-fields. She also exported large quantities of grain. Rumanian industry worked to capacity. Germany's share in it had been increased by 'buying' at low prices the assets of companies from the West European occupied countries, especially French and Belgian. Many enterprises formerly belonging to Jews had been acquired under the 'Rumanianisation' decrees by members of the German minority in Transylvania and thus passed under more direct control of the Reich government than those in ethnic Rumanian ownership.

The government was always preoccupied with the Transylvanian question. Hungary, though an ally in the war against Russia, was still considered an enemy. Antonescu sought support against Hungary from the two new Axis vassals, Croatia and Slovakia, thus forming a sort of new Little Entente. He also sought the support of Italy as a counter-balance to German predominance. Professor Mihai Antonescu, who became Vice-Premier under the supreme leadership of the Conducător—now promoted Marshal—had Western sympathies and was distrusted by the Germans.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For details of Mihai Antonescu's unsuccessful attempts to persuade Mussolini to lead the allies of Germany out of the war by a separate peace with the West, see the memoirs of the Italian Minister in Bucharest at that time, Bova Scoppa, *Colloqui con due dittatori* (Ruffolo, 1949).

In 1943 the Rumanian people had grown sick of the war. The casualties were approaching half a million. The unpaid German debt was piling up as the country's wealth was drained away. Big landowners and rich peasants, who had an appreciable surplus to sell, were making money from trade with Germany, but the much more numerous smallholders gained nothing, while the cost of essential goods rose. The townspeople, both workers and State employees, suffered badly from rising prices. German arrogance and exploitation were every day more resented. Maniu continued to send wordy protests to Marshal Antonescu, and vague messages of goodwill to the Allies by occasional contacts between travelling Rumanians and Englishmen in neutral capitals. More serious opposition was attempted by the very small illegal Communist Party. In the summer of 1943 the communists approached Maniu with a proposal for a 'Patriotic Front', on the familiar Popular Front lines, resistance to Germany and a broad progressive social and political programme. The stumbling block was Bessarabia. Maniu as an uncompromising nationalist insisted that Rumania must keep the 'liberated' province, the communists as uncompromising supporters of Moscow insisted that it must be 'restored' to the Soviet fatherland. The talks broke down. The Patriotic Union was formed without Maniu, but was a weak organisation. Besides communists, there were some intellectuals and politicians of left sympathies. The most eminent of these was Dr. Petru Groza, a former minister who in the thirties had become associated with a radical peasant group in south-west Transylvania, named the Ploughman's Front. Some peasants of this group were also involved in the activities of the 'Union', which succeeded in printing an illegal newspaper *România liberă*, and distributing it in the capital and some provincial centres. There were a few acts of sabotage, but no guerrilla movement developed.

In March 1944 a former Premier and leading figure of the Liberal Party in the twenties, Prince Barbu Știrbey, arrived in Cairo, having left Rumania for Turkey with a legal passport and the permission of the Rumanian government. He had been sent by Maniu to discuss with the Allied Powers how Rumania could be brought out of the war. The Antonescus doubtless knew of his plans. Their position was that they had no quarrel with the Western Powers but must defend their country against the advancing Russians. Maniu himself would have liked to obtain special terms from the Western Powers, and to enlist their support

against Russian demands. He realised, of course, that Rumania would have to stop fighting the Russians, but he wanted a preliminary guarantee from the Western Powers that they would see to it that she was well treated by the Russians. He also wished to arrange for Western troops to be landed by air in Rumania in the event of her surrender. Later in the year the Antonescu government also began to make overtures to both the Western Powers and the Soviet Union through neutral countries. The Western governments made it perfectly clear that they would not make terms with Rumania behind their Soviet ally's back. They considered that Rumania's task was to make peace with Russia, and were willing to do anything they could to facilitate this result. But the leading part in peace talks must be reserved for the U.S.S.R. The Soviet government was fully and immediately informed of all Rumanian overtures. Subsequent assertions by Soviet and Rumanian communist propagandists that the Western Powers intrigued with Maniu against the U.S.S.R. are deliberate lies.

The Soviet Minister in Cairo, who spoke to Ştirbey on behalf of his government, gave him the Soviet conditions at the end of March. On 2 April Molotov made a statement on Soviet policy to Rumania, in which he disclaimed on behalf of the Soviet government any intention to interfere with the internal political or social system of the country if it would turn against the Germans. On 4 April there was a heavy raid by bombers of the Allied Mediterranean Command on Bucarest. Soon after this the proposed armistice terms, agreed by the three Allied Powers, were handed to Ştirbey, who in his messages to Maniu strongly advised quick acceptance. On 15 and 21 April there were further bombardments of Bucarest. But Maniu could not make up his mind to act, either to overthrow Antonescu, or to persuade him to surrender on the Allied terms, or himself to leave Rumania to set up a rival government outside. He complained about Allied bombing, continued to ask for Western troops to assist him, and treated the terms not as an ultimatum but as a basis of discussions. He insisted on sending out a further emissary. The man chosen was Constantin Vişoianu, a former diplomat, a firm friend of the Western Powers, a convinced democrat and for many years a champion of Rumanian-Soviet friendship. But Vişoianu did not bring information or proposals sufficient to modify the Allied attitude. Communications between Cairo and Bucarest were difficult. The landings in France increased the urgency of the

situation but also sustained the illusion that terms could be arranged with the West only.

During the summer there were further contacts inside Rumania between the communists and Maniu. The social democrats and the liberals also took part. In the winter the leaders of the Patriotic Union, including Groza, had been arrested. But the communists still had underground leaders. One was Emil Bodnăraş, a Rumanian subject of Ukrainian origin, who had been a lieutenant in the Rumanian army but had deserted to the U.S.S.R. in 1937. The party's leader, Gheorghiu-Dej, the organiser of the 1933 railway strike, escaped from internment in August. All four parties now agreed that action against the Germans was imperative, but they still hesitated. It was a group of army officers and diplomats from the immediate entourage of King Michael who played the decisive role.<sup>1</sup>

King Michael had succeeded to the throne when his father abdicated in September 1940. At first he had been completely overshadowed by Antonescu. By 1944 he began to show a will of his own. He disliked both Antonescu and the Germans, and sympathised with the Western Powers. The influence of his mother, who returned to Rumania after Carol's abdication and was living with Michael, was exerted in the same direction. The young king commanded the devoted loyalty of the army. He was in touch with Maniu, who also expressed his devotion. Niculescu-Buzeşti, a high Foreign Office official and a confidant of Maniu, played a leading part in persuading the king to act. On 23 August the king invited both Antonescus to the palace and then had them arrested by his guard. During the day troops were brought into the capital. In the evening the king's proclamation was read over the Bucarest radio. It announced that Rumania was no longer at war with the Allies, and instructed the army to cease firing on the Red Army. A new government was formed under General Sănătescu. The departmental posts were held by generals, but the leaders of the four parties—Maniu, Constantin Brătianu, Pătrăşcanu (communist) and Titel Petrescu (socialist)—entered the cabinet as ministers without portfolio.

The action of 23 August 1944 was one of the decisive events of the Second World War. It opened all south-east Europe to the Red Army. It was soon followed by the defection of Bulgaria and the liberation of Belgrade. King Michael detested the Ger-

<sup>1</sup> For further details of the 1944 *coup d'état*, see Barker, *Truce in the Balkans*, pp. 130-2, and Markham, *Rumania under the Soviet Yoke*, pp. 175-83.

mans, but at first considered it dishonourable to turn his arms against them. They were therefore informed that they would be allowed to withdraw peacefully and in order from Rumania. The German reaction, however, was to bomb Bucarest, specially aiming at the royal palace. They also attempted at the last moment to install an Iron Guard regime. A 'Free Rumanian Government' was proclaimed under the exiled Horia Sima. It never had any authority or controlled any territory. The Rumanian troops loyally obeyed their king. They disarmed German forces in the greater part of the country. As a result of the bombing of Bucarest, Michael on 25 August formally declared war on Germany. Rumanian troops, amounting to more than fifteen divisions, fought beside the Red Army. Their main objective was the reconquest of northern Transylvania from the Hungarians, but they did not stop when this had been done. They fought on through northern Hungary and played an important part in the liberation of Slovakia. Having suffered some half a million casualties fighting for Hitler, the Rumanian army now suffered a further 150,000 fighting against him.

Rumania's change of front, together with the Teheran decision not to open a front in the Balkans, decided the fate of Central Europe, decided that the Soviet Union should dominate the whole region, that its new order should be a communist new order. Generalissimo Stalin therefore had good reason later to award to King Michael the highest Soviet decoration, the Order of Victory.

#### BULGARIA

Bulgaria joined the Three Power Pact on 1 March 1941. During the month German troops poured into the country from Rumania. Britain broke off diplomatic relations. On 6 April German troops entered Yugoslav Macedonia from Bulgaria. Bulgaria's reward for her help was the annexation of large territories from her two neighbours. Yugoslav Macedonia and Greek Thrace were incorporated in the Bulgarian state, though the Axis leaders made it clear that this would have to be confirmed by the peace treaty after final victory. Bulgarian troops also occupied a part of Serbia, and their commitments increased in the later stages of the war as German troops were transferred to other fronts. Greek Macedonia was at first occupied only by Italian or German troops, but in 1943 the Bulgarian zone was extended westward, first to the Struma and then to the Vardar.

Neither this area of Greece nor the occupied zone of Serbia were incorporated in Bulgaria.

King Boris remained the real ruler of Bulgaria until his death in August 1943. He never liked the Axis leaders, and they never trusted him. But he felt himself unable to resist the constant pressure of Bulgarian nationalist opinion, which in any case he himself shared, in favour of the annexation of Macedonia and Thrace. To resist by force the Axis demand for passage of troops would have meant fighting on the side of Bulgaria's prospective victims against the power which was offering Bulgaria pieces of their territory. This would have been more than Boris could ask of his subjects. But when Germany declared war on Russia, both the government and public opinion were most unwilling to assist her. In the preceding two years the fact of the German-Soviet pact had been of great value to Germanophiles in Bulgaria. Most Bulgarians were instinctively pro-Russian. It is true that in her short history independent Bulgaria had had several quarrels with Russia and had once fought a war against her. But it was generally felt that these quarrels had done Bulgaria no good, and that though the Russians had sometimes behaved badly, they were nevertheless the elder brothers of the Bulgarians. This attitude was by no means confined to communists, but was well exploited by them. As long as Russia could be represented as Germany's friend, pro-German propaganda in Bulgaria was made easy. The German-Russian war made many Bulgarians—including many who were far from being communist—hostile to Germany, and the great majority desired neutrality.

Bulgaria remained in fact officially neutral until the last days of the regime. But a very wide interpretation was put on the word 'neutrality' by both sides. Soviet aircraft dropped parachutists and Soviet submarines landed agents, mostly Bulgarians who had lived in the Soviet Union, communist exiles from Bulgaria, or members of the small Bulgarian minorities in South Russia. The Bulgarian government sponsored the most violent anti-Soviet propaganda, and an 'anti-Bolshevik exhibition' organised by the Germans was shown in the larger Bulgarian towns. Official protests were exchanged on this and other occasions between the Bulgarian and Soviet governments.

During 1942 German pressure for greater Bulgarian assistance increased. The German navy was granted facilities at the Black Sea ports of Varna and Burgas, and the Soviet consulate at Varna was closed. German military missions, signals personnel and police

experts came to Bulgaria, and there was close co-ordination between the German and Bulgarian secret services for the repression of communist or other subversive activities. But there were never whole German field units in Bulgaria. Bulgaria was not at any time an occupied country. The Bulgarian government was always in control of the country. If it had wished to abandon the Axis, it could have done so, though it might then have had to face an Axis invasion. Apologists of Bulgaria have to some extent succeeded in creating the impression in the Allied world that Bulgaria was a victim of Axis policy. This is not so. The Bulgarian government was a willing ally of the Axis against her Balkan neighbours and the Anglo-Saxon Powers and a non-belligerent helper against Russia. It was fully responsible for its actions. Its military contribution to the Axis cause was much smaller than those of Rumania or Hungary, but its choice was freer and its sympathy at least as great. Its economic contribution was also smaller, as it was a less developed and a poorer country. But such economic resources as Bulgaria possessed were placed at the disposal of the Germans. Already in the early thirties Germany was by far the most important customer of Bulgarian exports. Before 1941 Bulgarian tobacco and foodstuffs were paid by German manufactured goods and machinery, most of which was of real value to the Bulgarian economy. But as the war dragged on, Germany became increasingly unable to deliver to Bulgaria, though Bulgarian exports continued to pour into Germany. The German debt piled up, and the Bulgarian economy was in effect robbed.

Armed intervention by Bulgaria in the war against Russia was not without supporters on the extreme right. Attempts were made to raise a Bulgarian volunteer force, but with no success. Outside the government ex-Premier Tsankov was the most prominent champion of complete subservience to Germany. Inside the cabinet the most determined Germanophile was the Minister of the Interior Gabrovsky, who was responsible for the efficient and—even by Balkan standards—exceptionally cruel political police. In April 1942 six ministers, including Popov (Foreign Affairs), Daskalov (War) and Mitakov (Justice) resigned. The same Premier, Professor Filov, formed a new cabinet, himself taking Foreign Affairs, with General Mihov as War Minister and the pro-German Zahariev as Minister of Commerce. The new government continued the policy of neutrality towards Russia. The chief apologist in the General Staff of war with Russia,

General Lukov, had been assassinated on 13 February. This was believed to be the work of communists, and was followed by mass arrests. At this time the central committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party was divided in two. The most authoritative leaders, Dimitrov and Kolarov, were in the Soviet Union, but an 'internal leadership' led by Kostov and Anton Ivanov operated underground inside Bulgaria. Though assassination is usually not favoured by communists, exceptions can be made for enemies of the Soviet Union. The assassination of Lukov was followed by that of the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament, Yanev (15 April), and the chairman of the Military Court of the Sofia region, Colonel Pantev (3 May). In the police raids and mass arrests which followed these incidents, the whole 'internal leadership' of the Communist Party was captured.<sup>1</sup> A number of death sentences were carried out during the early summer. One victim was General Zaimov, no communist, but a close friend of Velchev, the leader of the old 'Military League'. Zaimov was executed on 2 June for espionage on behalf of the U.S.S.R. At the same time anti-semitic legislation was introduced. In May Jews were forbidden to reside in Sofia. On 28 August the cabinet approved the creation of a Commissariat of Jewish Affairs under a certain Belev. Employment of Jews was restricted, they were forced to wear a yellow star, and further restrictions were made in the places where they might live.

Repression did not end resistance. By the summer of 1943 the communists, under new leaders, were beginning to organise guerrilla bands in the mountains. The most successful band operated in the Sredna Gora mountains east of Sofia and north of the Maritsa Valley. Other bands sprang up during the summer in the Balkan range and in the south-western mountains. Since the war Bulgarian communist propaganda has enormously exaggerated their numbers and significance. They never 'fought the Germans', as there were no German units in Bulgaria to fight. They fought against Bulgarian police, and in certain cases army units. They were of some value to the Allied cause as they held down part of the armed forces of an enemy state. They damaged communications and destroyed a number of trains carrying goods

<sup>1</sup> See Orlin Vasiliev, *Suprotivata*. This voluminous and somewhat optimistic account of Bulgarian resistance, which sets out to show the Communist Party in the most heroic possible light, nevertheless contains a number of documents which seem likely to be genuine. It naturally portrays Kostov as a hero. At the trial of Kostov for treason in December 1949 (*u. below*, p. 315), it was claimed by the prosecution that when in prison at this time Kostov had purchased his life by the betrayal of his comrades.

to and from Germany. They also destroyed some industrial equipment, but for the most part minor enterprises, such as village cheese factories and sawmills in remote hill districts. They 'executed fascists', that is to say pro-government mayors and village officials, and frequently raided and destroyed minor official archives. This all served to demoralise and disorganise the administration, as well as to protect underground communists—and also common criminals—by the removal of police records. It all made Bulgaria a less useful ally for the Nazis.

The underground political opposition was formed into a coalition called the Fatherland Front. The idea of such a coalition—which corresponded to the traditional communist tactic of the Popular Front—was urged by the exiled Dimitrov in the Soviet press and radio, and became the programme of a Soviet-controlled secret radio station broadcasting in Bulgarian, called after the Bulgarian national hero Hristo Botev. The same idea was taken up by similar radio stations controlled by the Western Powers, and later by the B.B.C. The Bulgarian guerrilla forces, or partisans, were said to be under the orders of the Fatherland Front. The Front consisted of communists, left-wing agrarians (led by Petkov in the country and by Dr. G. M. Dimitrov in exile in the Middle East), social democrats and the 'Zveno' party (a group of politicians formerly associated with Velchev's Military League and advocating a republic of a democratic semi-socialist type). As the leaders of the three non-communist parties were all well-known people living legally, they could not do much to organise armed revolt, but they approved of guerrilla action. The practical link between the top political leaders of the Front and the fighters in the mountains was provided by the communist underground organisation. The leaders of the bands were mostly communists. The bands had, as elsewhere in the Balkans, political commissars, and spent much time when they were not fighting in political propaganda or 'education'. The members of the bands were disaffected peasants, of whom some were supporters of the Agrarian Party and some had no fixed political ideas. Apart from the partisan bands, the communists also organised sabotage in the factories, assassinations and subversion in the army. In May unsuccessful attempts were made on an engineer named Yanakiev, who was in charge of radio direction-finding, and in June the governor of Plovdiv was killed. During the summer a number of communist secret radio transmitters were found by the police and there were more executions and long prison sentences.

On 28 August 1943 King Boris suddenly died soon after returning from a visit to Germany. A Regency Council was formed of the late king's brother Prince Cyril, the Premier Filov, and the War Minister Mihov. This was approved by parliament, contrary to the Constitution of 1879, which laid down that on such occasions a special Grand National Assembly has to be elected. The new King Simeon was a boy of six. The new Premier was Bozhilov, who had been Minister of Finance under Filov, General Rusev was War Minister in succession to Mihov, and the interior was given to Hristov. During the autumn Hristov organised energetic measures against the partisans. Though their activities were not of great importance, the partisans undoubtedly infuriated the government, which became more and more pre-occupied with the fight against them. By this alone it may be argued that they justified their existence. In January 1944 a new repressive organisation was created, the State Gendarmerie, equipped with heavier weapons than the police, and motorised, expressly for fighting partisans.

The Bulgarian partisans in the summer of 1943 aroused the interest of the Allied Middle East and Mediterranean commands. In so far as they were holding down enemy forces they were of value to the Allied war effort, and deserved material help such as Yugoslav and Greek guerrillas had received. British liaison officers were sent to Yugoslav and Greek guerrilla units in Serbia and Thrace with instructions to contact Bulgarian bands. The Serbian base was the more important. The Yugoslav partisans helped the Bulgarian bands operating on their frontier, and also encouraged the formation of bands from deserters from the Bulgarian occupation forces. These were increasingly replacing German forces in Serbia. Their morale was low and they were accessible to communist propaganda. Some British arms and supplies reached Bulgarian bands. They were dropped by parachute to the British liaison officers at the Serbian area, and passed by them to the Bulgarian bands. The help was very small, for the Allied air forces in the Mediterranean theatre had enormous commitments, both to support other resistance forces and to support regular military operations. In helping Bulgarian partisans two British officers, Major Mostyn Davies and Major Frank Thompson, lost their lives.<sup>1</sup> Contact with Bulgarian bands in the

<sup>1</sup> A memoir of Frank Thompson, entitled *There is a Spirit in Europe* (Gollancz, 1947), contains an account by a Bulgarian partisan who took part in the operations on the Serbo-Bulgarian border (pp. 173-7, 183-7).

Rhodope mountains was established from Greek Thrace in the summer of 1944, but before supplies could be organised Bulgaria was out of the war.

The Bozhilov cabinet resigned on 21 May 1944. A few days later the Regent Filov visited Hitler. On his return a new government was formed under a former agrarian, Bagrianov. It was markedly less devoted to the Axis than its predecessor. One of its first acts was to release 15,000 political prisoners and to set free relatives of partisans who were being held as hostages. Changes were made in the personnel of the political police, and the anti-Jewish measures were appreciably relaxed. On 17 August Bagrianov spoke in parliament of the Bulgarian people's desire for peace. On 22 August his Foreign Minister Draganov said that Bulgaria would seek peace with the Western Powers and would withdraw from the Serbian and Greek areas occupied by Bulgarian troops, but that Macedonia and Thrace were 'Bulgarian by right'. Bulgaria had of course suffered far less from the war than the other Axis allies. There had been some Allied air-raids on Sofia, of which those of 10 January and 30 March 1944 had been severe. But Bulgaria had not been subject to direct German pressure, and she could have come out of the war earlier if she had chosen. In fact she did not act until after Rumania. King Michael arrested Antonescu on 23 August, Bagrianov's envoys did not reach Cairo until 30 August. They were Stoicho Moshanov, a politician of the liberal centre, and a colonel, Zhelezkov. As Bulgaria was not at war with the U.S.S.R., the Western Powers were perfectly entitled to receive her peace envoys. The Soviet representatives in Cairo were, however, fully informed of the conversations. The assertion of Soviet and Bulgarian communist propaganda that the Western Powers intrigued with the Bagrianov government behind the back of their Soviet ally is a deliberate lie.

While Moshanov was in Cairo, the situation in Bulgaria moved rapidly. On 2 September a new government was formed by the Regency. Its Premier was the right-wing agrarian Muraviev. It contained such eminent elder statesmen as the Democrat Party leader Mushanov, and the agrarian Gichev. It represented the moderate democratic parties, which had opposed the German orientation of Bulgarian policy already in 1941, but distrusted the communists, had not joined the Fatherland Front, and could not bring themselves to renounce all the territory taken from Yugoslavia and Greece. Though they had disliked accepting these

lands as a gift from Hitler, they none the less insisted that 'justice' required that Macedonia and Thrace, which Bulgaria had claimed before Hitler was even born, should be Bulgarian. The Muraviev government declared itself no longer at war with the Anglo-Saxon Powers, and neutral in the German-Russian war.

This was not good enough for the Soviet Union. In Moscow's view the appropriate way for Bulgaria to come out of the war would have been to seek the mediation of the Soviet government, which still had its legation in Sofia. Although it was true that Bulgaria had to make peace only with the Anglo-Saxon Powers, Moscow did not like to see her approach them direct. In Soviet eyes this looked like a perfidious intrigue between Bulgarian reactionaries and Western imperialists. In order to make it quite clear that the Soviet Union was directly interested in the Bulgarian settlement, the Soviet government suddenly, and without previously informing its Western allies, declared war on Bulgaria on 5 September. Muraviev at once asked the Soviet legation for peace terms. The Red Army had now reached the Rumanian-Bulgarian frontier in the Dobrudja in force. On 6 September Muraviev, seeing that neutrality was no longer possible, declared war on Germany. Two days later the Red Army entered Bulgaria, meeting with no resistance. On 9 September there was a *coup d'état* in Sofia. The Fatherland Front seized power. Workers' demonstrations and strikes in the main cities, organised by the underground Communist Party, played their part. So did the Front's sympathisers within the army, especially certain officers connected with the Military League such as Colonel Kyril Stanchev. The partisans came down from the mountains, and arms were distributed to new recruits, many of whom had done little or no fighting.

The new government was headed by Colonel Kimon Georgiev, who had been Premier of the Military League government of 1934. The communists were represented by two resistance leaders, Tarpeshev and Yugov, who became Vice-Premier and Minister of the Interior. The outstanding agrarian representative was Petkov, who was also Vice-Premier. The War Ministry went to Velchev. The Bulgarian army in Yugoslavia was ordered to join the Yugoslav partisans in fighting against the Germans. There was no serious disaffection in the Bulgarian army. The German attempt to create a 'Free Bulgarian Government' under the fascist Tsankov (Premier in 1923-5) was as complete a failure as the similar attempt at a 'Free Rumanian Government' under Horia

Sima. Bulgarian troops had some hard fighting to take Skoplje and Nish, and then advanced on the left flank of the Red Army to Belgrade, which was liberated on 20 October. The Bulgarian army continued fighting, side by side with the Soviet and Yugoslav forces, through Croatia and Hungary to Vienna. In these operations it had some 30,000 dead.

The armistice between the Allies and Bulgaria was signed in Moscow on 28 October 1944 by representatives of the Red Army and of the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.

#### HUNGARY

Hungary had been drawn closer to the Axis since Munich by the acquisition of southern Slovakia (1938) and northern Transylvania (1940). But the Hungarian leaders had considered these gains a mere recognition of Hungary's rights, and had done their best to avoid any obligations to the Axis Powers. Hungary joined the Three Power Pact in November 1940, but signed a treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia in December as a last attempt to reinforce her neutrality. The fatal moment for Hungarian policy was April 1941, when the Germans insisted on the passage of their troops for attack on Yugoslavia and also insisted on Hungarian co-operation in the attack. The Hungarian army command was much more pro-German than the politicians. Traditional connections with the Austrian army had something to do with this. A large proportion of the Hungarian officer corps were people of German origin. Pressure from his generals, together with the bait of the still 'unredeemed' province of Bačka, taken from Hungary by Yugoslavia in 1919, were too much for Admiral Horthy. His Prime Minister committed suicide, but he marched with the Axis. Britain broke off diplomatic relations with Hungary. This was for many Hungarians of the ruling class a heavy glow, for they treasured their connections with Britain.<sup>1</sup> But they believed either that the British cause was lost, or that if in the end Britain should win Hungary would find an opportunity before then of reinsuring herself.

The Hungarian General Staff played a still more important part in dragging Hungary into war with the Soviet Union. Teleki's successor was the Foreign Minister Bárdossy, a career diplomat who seems to have been chosen precisely because he was colourless, and so not unacceptable to any one. When Germany

<sup>1</sup> Ullein-Reviczky, a senior official of the Budapest Foreign Ministry in 1941 and Hungarian Minister in Stockholm in 1943-4, states in his book, *Guerre allemande, paix russe*, pp. 93-4, that it was the British attitude which caused Teleki to commit suicide.

declared war on Russia, Bárdossy wished at first to remain neutral, then considered a breach of diplomatic relations. He was against military action, and maintained this view at a meeting of the cabinet on 24 June despite the strong recommendation of the Chief of General Staff that war be declared. The argument of the generals was that Rumania was fighting, and if Hungary did not fight too Hitler might listen to Rumanian requests for the restoration of north Transylvania as a reward. If on the other hand Hungary fought more effectively than Rumania, she would have a moral claim on Germany to give her southern Transylvania as well. This use of the Transylvanian bait to spur on both Hungary and Rumania to greater military effort was a constant feature of German policy throughout the war with Russia. In June 1941, however, it did not at first impress Bárdossy, who with the support of his colleagues refused the General Staff's request.<sup>1</sup> But opposition was overcome two days later, when the German and Hungarian military authorities announced that Soviet aircraft had bombarded the Hungarian (ex-Czechoslovak) border city of Kassa (Košice). The announcement of this violation of Hungarian territory—whose truth has never been established—was followed by a Hungarian declaration of war.

Hungary's military contribution was smaller, in proportion to the country's population, than that of Rumania. In 1941 only a small force took part in the operations in the Ukraine. After the German reverses of the winter, German demands on Hungary increased. In January 1942 Ribbentrop visited Budapest, and was followed soon after by Keitel. As a result of these talks a Second Army was created under the command of General Jány, numbering some 150,000. It took part in the offensive of summer and autumn 1942, and was cut to pieces at Voronezh. Casualties were heavy and there were many Hungarian prisoners. After this disaster Hungarian opinion hardened against the war, and the government strongly resisted further German demands. Most of the remaining Hungarian troops were withdrawn from the battle area and guarded communications in the Western Ukraine and Galicia, fighting Ukrainian partisans (nationalist as well as communist), but engaging in no large operations.

But Hungary's value to the Axis was not solely military. Railway communications across Hungary—whose network is very much better developed than in the areas to the north or south—were vitally important to the Germans for supply-

<sup>1</sup> Ullien-Reviczky, *Guerre allemande, paix russe*, pp. 103-5.

ing their forces in Russia and in the Balkans and for transporting reinforcements. Hungarian industry was growing in importance. Until the summer of 1944 it was free from Allied bombing, and produced valuable equipment. Hungarian foodstuffs and raw materials were also of value to Germany. Exports continued until the last stages of the war, while German deliveries in payment dwindled as a result of shortages and dislocation in the Reich. By the end of the war the German debt to Hungary was enormous. In practice this unpaid debt constituted a large-scale robbery by the Germans.

Bárdossy was replaced as Premier in March 1942. One of the last important events under his government was the massacre of Serbs and Jews by Hungarian troops in the Bačka town of Novi Sad (Ujvidék) in January, in which several thousand persons lost their lives. Horthy dismissed Bárdossy because of a disagreement regarding the succession of his son Stephen to him as Regent. The new premier was Count Nicholas Kállay, a member of a very old Hungarian family, a strong nationalist who disliked the Germans.

Hungary still possessed parliamentary institutions, though of a limited character. There was more freedom of political opinion than in any other country of Axis Europe except Finland. The largest party was of course the governmental 'Life Party' (M.E.P.).<sup>1</sup> This heterogeneous organisation had a left, a right and a centre, and was divided on both home and foreign policy. Its extreme right was strongly pro-Axis and wished to suppress the parties of the left, especially the social democrats. The left wing of M.E.P., though definitely conservative in outlook, wished to preserve the existing degree of freedom of speech and favoured resistance to German demands. It aimed to bring Hungary out of the war. It was on the whole pro-British. The main spokesman of the right was the Finance Minister, Reményi-Schneller; of the left, the Minister of the Interior, Keresztes-Fischer. Kállay himself inclined rather to the left than to the right wing.

Outside the government party there were two main right-wing groups. The Party of Rebirth, led by ex-premier Imrédy, was strongly pro-German, but was not ideologically fascist. Imrédy would have liked to suppress left-wing opinion but to preserve parliamentary institutions within narrower limits. The Arrow Cross Party led by Szálasi wished to destroy the parliamentary regime and introduce a totalitarian fascist state. Szálasi also had some vague ideas about social revolution in general, and land

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 25.

reform in particular, whereas Imrédy wished to preserve the existing social system, with its domination by landowners and business men. Szálasi was of course even more pro-German than Imrédy.

The opposition to the government on the left consisted of the Small Farmers' Party, the socialists and some independent intellectuals. All were strongly anti-German and pro-British. In July 1943 a memorandum by the Small Farmers' Party, written by its acting leader, Bajcsi-Zsilinszky, actually stated that if the choice were forced on Hungary she would do better to fight against the Germans than against the British. The party's leader, Eckhardt, was in the United States. During 1942 the leaders of the Small Farmers and the socialists began to co-operate more closely than had ever been the case before the war. The trade unions still existed, and were controlled by the socialists. They had few powers, but at least they provided a working-class organisation through which workers' leaders could be formed.

At the end of 1942 the socialist newspaper *Népszava* began to write about a 'People's Front' and a struggle for democracy and independence—strange language in a country allied with Hitler. Though the socialists were tolerated by the authorities, the police and the army (including particularly the State Defence Department of the General Staff under General Ujszászi) were always on the look-out for communists. There were of course some radical elements in the Socialist Party which sympathised with the Soviet Union, and would have been open communists if that had been permitted. At the end of 1942 an underground communist organisation published leaflets signed 'Peace Party'. But the bulk of the Hungarian socialists had mixed feelings about the U.S.S.R. and looked rather to the labour movements of the West. They made no secret of their hatred of Germany. They were protected by the Minister of the Interior, Keresztes-Fischer, who resisted attempts by the Hungarian right to identify the whole workers' movement with communism and suppress it.

Among the intellectual supporters of the People's Front idea were the conservative historian Professor Szekfü and a group of younger radical writers who already before the war had made special studies of the agrarian question and had tried in 1939 to found a National Peasant Party with a programme more radical than that of the Small Farmers' Party. Another democratic organisation was the Peasant League, founded in 1941 by Ferenc Nagy, a leading member of the Small Farmers' Party. This was

intended to be a class organisation rather than a political party, to help the education of the peasants, to organise social and cultural activities in the villages, start local newspapers and encourage peasants to express views in speech and writing on matters of interest to them. It too was protected by Keresztes-Fischer.

By the summer of 1943 most members of the Hungarian government, including Kállay, were longing for an opportunity to get out of the war. The surrender of Italy raised their hopes. But when there was no British landing in the Adriatic, the Germans occupied most of Italy, and Ciano and other 'traitors to the Axis' were executed, optimism once more gave way to depression. The depression was increased by the Russian advance. Kállay was willing to surrender to the Western Powers, but not to the Red Army. The old Hungarian dislike of Russia was reinforced by memories of the 1918 revolution and fears for the fundamentally weak and outdated Hungarian social system. During the summer of 1943 Kállay made contact with the representatives of the Western Powers in several neutral capitals.<sup>1</sup> He hoped at this time with German consent to withdraw all Hungarian troops to the 1941 frontiers and take no further part in the war. He would be glad even to help the Anglo-Saxon forces provided that they would establish direct physical contact with his own through Italy and Croatia. He seems to have hoped that the Russians would advance against Germany through Poland, and by-pass Hungary. He wanted to remain neutral, but would even fight the Germans as soon as the Anglo-Saxon Powers were in a position to defend Hungary from German vengeance. But there must be no Soviet troops on Hungarian soil. The Western Powers pointed out that the U.S.S.R. was their ally, that they could not make separate peace with Hungary, and that if Hungary wished to regain Allied goodwill she must prove her change of heart by actions not words. They informed the Soviet government of the progress of the talks. Soviet and communist propagandists have alleged that the Western Powers intrigued with Kállay behind the backs of their Soviet ally. There is no more truth in these allegations than in the similar allegations with regard to the Štirbey and Moshanov missions, mentioned above. In the face of the unbending Western attitude, Kállay could only hesitate. The ghosts of Ciano and Béla Kun were always present. Meanwhile German mistrust of Kállay grew, and pressure increased from the followers of Imrédy

<sup>1</sup> An incomplete but useful account of these contacts is given in Ullein-Reviczky, *op. cit.*

and from the right wing of M.E.P. The latter group produced a memorandum in February 1944 in which they bitterly criticised the Premier for tolerating treasonable agitation by socialists and Small Farmers' Party, for over-estimating the power of the Anglo-Saxon forces and for ignoring the danger of Bolshevism. The exponents of this point of view inside the cabinet were the Ministers of Finance, Supplies and War, Reményi-Schneller, Szász and Csataj.

When the Red Army broke into Bessarabia at the beginning of 1944 the German command had to make sure of Hungary, through whose territory the main communications went. On 19 March German troops marched into Hungary from Austria, Slovakia and Croatia. There was no resistance. Kállay took refuge in the Turkish legation, the best-known enemies of the Germans were arrested or went into hiding, and a new government was formed under General Sztojaj, Hungarian Minister in Berlin and a 'reliable' stooge of the Reich. The three pro-German members of Kállay's cabinet kept their posts. Imrédy and several of his supporters entered the government. The Sztojaj cabinet was the last pro-German reserve of the Hungarian regime. If it proved inadequate, Hitler could only fall back on the pseudo-revolutionary fascist mob of Szálasi. But his experience with the Rumanian Iron Guard made him unwilling to do this. Meanwhile Sztojaj and Imrédy showed plenty of goodwill. The Hungarian war effort was to be increased. Trade unions, Socialist and Small Farmers' parties were dissolved. Persecution of Jews was begun in earnest. Hitherto anti-semitic action by the Hungarian government had not gone beyond comparatively mild economic discrimination. Jews suspected of communist sympathies had always been worse treated than non-Jews. Some had been deported to penal labour battalions on the Russian Front, and of these many had perished miserably. Now, however, the whole Jewish community in Hungary was attacked. Jewish property was expropriated and hundreds of thousands of Jews were deported to the German extermination centres in occupied Poland.

Regent Horthy and his intimate advisers undoubtedly disliked the Sztojaj government. The successes of the Anglo-Saxon armies in France in the summer gave him new courage. On 7 August he dismissed Imrédy and two of his supporters from the cabinet. On 29 August, under the impression of Rumania's surrender, he dismissed Sztojaj. The new government was led by General Lakatos, and was mainly military. The pro-German Reményi-

Schneller, however, retained the Finance Ministry. By now Horthy had decided to abandon Germany, and realised that he must come to terms with Russia as well as with the Western Powers. He began secret negotiations with the underground left-wing leaders. The small farmers were led by Bajcsi-Zsilinszky and Tildy; the socialists by Szakasits, the editor of *Népszava* (the party's outstanding leader, Peyer, having been arrested and sent to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria already in March); and the communists now emerged as a minor group in Budapest under a certain Rajk. Horthy was irresolute. His chief negotiator was General Ujszászi, head of the State Defence Section of the General Staff, and for many years the director of anti-communist repression. He now seems to have got on excellently with Rajk, both showing an aptitude for sentimental and dramatic phrasemongering.<sup>1</sup> On pressure from the underground leaders Horthy agreed to arrange for arms to be given to workers' organisations to help defend Budapest against German reprisals when Hungary's surrender was announced. But he kept postponing action, and the Germans, knowing well that something was being plotted, and possibly being even informed of details, made their preparations. On 15 October Horthy suddenly announced his intention to surrender and ordered his troops to cease fighting the Russians. No preparations were made. The arms were not handed over to the workers. Szálasi's fascists with German help took over the radio station and soon held the whole capital. The palace garrison under a loyal general put up some resistance. The Germans captured and executed Bajcsi-Zsilinszky and several generals, Horthy was deported to Germany, and a government of fascist fanatics was formed, continuity with the past being still represented by the pliable Reményi-Schneller.

The Szálasi regime was the last and most horrible chapter in Hungary's war-time tragedy. The Hungarian fascists competed in bestiality with their Rumanian comrades of 1940. Meanwhile the Red Army was advancing, and Hungary became a battleground. One Hungarian army commander, General Miklos, went over to the Russians and took some of his troops with him. The greater part of the Hungarian army obeyed the orders of Szálasi and the threats of their German allies. They continued to fight the Red Army and retreated into Austria. The capital was besieged for two months. In one part of it the Germans and the Hungarian

<sup>1</sup> For an account by an eye-witness of the negotiations between Horthy and the underground opposition, see Imre Kovács, *Im Schatten der Sowjets*. A fairly reliable and interesting Communist account is G. Kállai, *A magyar fűggetlenségi mozgalom*, Budapest, 1948.

fascist gangs murdered and robbed and destroyed, in the other half the Red Army raped and robbed and murdered. Artillery pounded the historic citadel of Buda to pieces. No other European city except Warsaw suffered such horrors.

In the eastern provinces the Soviet authorities encouraged the formation of a provisional government of Hungary. Its first Premier was General Miklos. It was based on a coalition of four parties—Small Farmers, Socialists, Communists and National Peasant Party. It was with representatives of this government that the three Allied Great Powers signed an armistice in Moscow on 21 January 1945. The siege of Budapest was over by 13 February, but the Germans fought hard in the western provinces, making a powerful counter-offensive near Székesfehérvár in March. Hungary was not completely cleared of Germans until 4th April. The government formally established itself in Budapest on 14 April 1945. Both the capital and a large part of the country were in ruins.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

#### RESISTANCE AND COLLABORATION

THE two opposed notions of resistance and collaboration are products of the Second World War. Small-scale banditry and full-scale guerrilla had of course been known before, especially in the three southern peninsulas of Europe—Spain, Italy and the Balkans. But it was usually accepted in European wars of the last century that in territory occupied in war the conquering power established a system of government with recognised rules, which were obeyed by the civilian population. To obey them was not treason to the lawful government, and there was no obligation to undertake sabotage or armed warfare against the occupying forces. The change is due to the ‘total’ nature of modern war and to the ideological nature of the Nazi German regime. Regarding Slavs and Jews as racially inferior, and both liberal and Marxist ideas as heresies to be extirpated, the Germans behaved in such a manner as to provoke resistance. Moreover they met with nationalist and revolutionary fanaticism no less implacable than their own. When it is added that both the anti-German Power groups—the Anglo-Saxons and the Soviet Union—deliberately encouraged resistance, and supplied some of the means to make it effective, the general reasons are clear. But before describing the main movements, a few general observations are needed on the types both of ‘collaboration’ and of ‘resistance’.

The words ‘quisling’, ‘puppet’, ‘traitor’ and ‘collaborator’ are often indiscriminately used as terms of abuse. But at least five different types can be distinguished. First are those who from fascist sympathies or personal ambition entered the services of the Axis Powers already before the invasion, and assisted them during and after conquest. Such men simply committed treason. Second are those who, belonging to national minorities or to nations deprived of equal status, felt no obligation towards their states and helped the Axis Powers in the belief that they were liberating their own nation. This too was treason, but with

extenuating circumstances. Examples are the Croatian Ustash or, the Slovak populists. Third are those who served their country during the invasion, but afterwards, being convinced that the Axis had won the war, that their exiled rulers would never return, and that fascism was the best form of government, decided to collaborate with the occupying forces in administering their country. Here treason is not so easy to identify, particularly in the case of Yugoslavia and Greece, whose army commanders had signed formal armistices. The fourth type are those who accepted office in the sincere belief that they would protect their people from oppression, interposing themselves and their administration between the civil population and the full rigour of the occupying Power. Their original intention was to preserve what was possible of the nation's interests until the victory of the Allies and the return of the legal authorities. General Nedić, the 'quisling Premier' of Serbia, was an example of this type. But conditions in German-occupied Eastern Europe in 1941-4 were very different from those in German-occupied Western Europe in 1914-18, which enabled Mayor Max of Brussels to play this part with the approval and respect of his fellow-countrymen. Nedić was soon obliged to take a stand on the two vital questions of suppressing the resistance and supplying labour levies for Germany. By helping the Germans in both, he placed himself on the side of the enemy. The last category consists of many who did their duty during the invasion campaign, remained loyal to their exiled governments and utterly hated the invaders, yet became increasingly alarmed by the growth of resistance movements under new and revolutionary leadership, and eventually assisted the occupying authorities against the resistance. They did not feel that they were betraying their fellow-countrymen, but merely that they were combating rebellion. Such conservatism and legal narrow-mindedness were not plain treason, but they were of course no less hateful to the resisters.

Resistance movements varied considerably, but certain basic conditions were required for all. The first was widespread national hatred of a foreign invader as such. This was almost universal among Czechs, Poles, Serbs and Greeks. It was much less strong, particularly in the first years, among Slovaks and Croats, who had received from the Germans a national independence which was not immediately felt to be a sham. It hardly existed at all among Rumanians and Bulgarians, whose states were allied with the Axis and were not subject to occupation.

This was also true of Hungary up to March 1944, after which opinion undoubtedly changed. A second condition was a state of intolerable oppression, such as to drive people into action. This existed in Poland and Yugoslavia, and as a result of the famine of 1941-2 it existed also in Greece. Once resistance started, it brought reprisals, and these further increased hatred. In Czechoslovakia, however, these conditions did not exist to the same extent. The Czech peasants and workers enjoyed material prosperity, and thus showed little inclination to revolt. Persecution was concentrated against the intellectuals, who reacted by the means at their disposal but were not able to organise a mass movement. This brings us to the third condition, the nature of the country. In mountainous and forested areas, armed resistance on a large scale was possible, as the rebels were able to take refuge in remote places which it was too troublesome for the enemy, with the time and personnel at his disposal, to explore. Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania abound in such country, and Poland has suitable forests. The Czech lands, however, are thickly populated and low-lying: in the mountainous parts of Bohemia, Germans predominated. Where conditions do not favour armed resistance, sabotage, assassinations, espionage and the rescue of escaped Allied prisoners or baled-out pilots are possible forms of resistance.

It soon became obvious that the mass resistance movements were fighting not only against the Germans, but for aims of their own. These can be not unfairly simplified into two alternatives—restoration of the pre-invasion regime or a social and political new deal. When the Germans invaded Russia, a further division appeared, between those who looked for liberation to the Anglo-Saxon Powers or to the Soviet Union. The two divisions were not identical. All who looked to the Soviet Union desired a new deal, but not all who desired a new deal looked to the Soviet Union. All who wished to restore the old regime preferred the Anglo-Saxons to the Soviets, but not all who sympathised with the Anglo-Saxons wished to restore the old regime.

These differences are especially important in the case of Poland. A united resistance movement was formed at a time when the Soviet Union still had friendly relations with Germany, and within the resistance the 'new deal' elements, represented by the peasant movement and the socialists, were stronger than the supporters of the old order. Moreover the Polish government in exile was not led by representatives of the Pilsudski-Beck regime.

By contrast, in Yugoslavia resistance was in a very primitive stage, and in Greece it had not begun, when Russia was invaded. Russia had always been regarded by the people of Yugoslavia, especially by the Serbs, as their natural protector, and the Greeks had often benefited from Russian friendship in the past, whereas to the Poles Russia was a traditional enemy. Thus a political party looking to Russia was likely to win strong support in Yugoslavia and considerable support in Greece, but had little prospect in Poland. For these various reasons then the communists were able in the Balkans to put themselves at the head of the 'new-dealers', but were unable in Poland.

When the communists began their resistance, they had the same aim as always in the past—political power. This was to be obtained by two means—by strengthening the defence of the U.S.S.R., 'the territorial base of the world revolution', through diversion of German troops from the front to crush rebellion in their rear, and by turning the war of liberation against the occupying forces into a civil war against their own ruling class. In liberated areas they set up their own administration, which not only organised supplies for the fighting men but prepared itself to take over political power in the country when the Germans were defeated. At first they had to fight, in addition to the invaders, only the quisling forces of the first four categories described above. But as the communists' political organisation became a serious rival to the pre-invasion order, so the loyal supporters of the exiled governments grew to regard the communists as a more dangerous enemy than the Germans. Another cause of bitterness was enemy reprisals. These fell most severely on those who had property to lose. Destruction of property did not worry the communists much, because most of their supporters had little, and any weakening of their future rivals was of advantage to them. But the wealthy peasants feared reprisals, and tried to prevent actions which would incur them.<sup>1</sup> From this it was not difficult to take the further step of armed collaboration with the occupying forces against the communists.

Fighting began between nationalists and communists in Yugoslavia already in 1941, in Greece and Albania in 1943. In Poland the same thing happened when Polish communist parachutists, dropped from Soviet aircraft, and acting independently of the main resistance forces, provoked German reprisals. The same

<sup>1</sup> For some interesting reflections on the subject of resistance movements, see article by Julian Amery in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, March 1949.

pattern extended even to the Soviet Ukraine, where a three-cornered struggle took place between the Germans, the nationalist Ukrainian Insurgent Army (U.P.A.) and the Ukrainian communist partisans acting on Red Army orders.<sup>1</sup> As Allied victory approached, the struggle for post-war power took precedence over the struggle against the Germans. The Polish Home Army gallantly fought the Germans to the end, although its forces were disarmed and its leaders maltreated by the advancing Red Army. In Greece the forces of Zervas for the most part and for most of the time kept clear of 'collaboration'. But the Mihailović movement in Yugoslavia, the Balli Kombetar in Albania and the U.P.A. in the Ukraine were drawn inexorably into support of the declining German war effort.

#### POLAND

Polish resistance had a military and a civilian origin. From the officers and soldiers who escaped through Rumania and Hungary to France, a small Polish army was created on Allied soil. At the same time a new government in exile was set up, led no longer by the politicians of the Pilsudski-Beck regime but by the great soldier General Sikorski and the representatives of the traditional Polish parties who had been opposed to the old regime—National Democrats, Socialists, People's (peasant) Party and Labour (Catholic) Party. After the first period of confusion, communications began to be established between the exiles and patriots inside Poland. Couriers could pass through Slovakia and Hungary without great difficulty, and radio communications were soon restored for shorter messages. Political ideas and organisation plans began to be exchanged between Poland and the free world. The successive Polish governments in exile never lost this contact. After the Polish government moved from France to Britain, and the entry of Italy into the war reduced the value of the Slovakia-Hungary route, there was still contact by radio, and courier lines were organised, not only to send special messages but also to evacuate escaped Allied prisoners-of-war, right through Germany, France and Spain to Gibraltar. The Polish governments in exile were more constantly in touch with opinion at home than any of the others from Eastern Europe.

The official policy of the exiled government and of the leaders

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the Ukrainian nationalist resistance, see Mikola Lebed, *Ukrainian Povstanska Armiya*, 1946. Independent evidence being entirely lacking on this subject, this work of a Ukrainian nationalist must be taken with some caution, but it is of considerable interest.

of the underground movement which grew up, was non-recognition of the German and Soviet occupations of Poland. The Polish state was considered still existing. The underground movement was to build up a secret government, administration, army, press and even law courts and schools. The army was led to some extent by former professional officers, who had escaped imprisonment by either invading army, but had not been able to escape abroad or had decided to stay. As the army had for more than ten years been packed with supporters of Pilsudski, and each new generation of officers after 1926 had been brought up to honour the Marshal, and after his death his successors, it was to be expected that the officers would have more sympathy with the old regime, and less enthusiasm for democracy, than other elements of the population. This was in fact probably the case, but the officers in the Home Army (A.K.), as the underground military organisation came to be called, loyally obeyed the orders of the exiled government and its civil representatives inside Poland.

The underground civil administration was headed by the chief delegate of the government in exile. He had twelve departments, corresponding to the main ministries of a normal state. In the provinces were regional delegates. There was an advisory 'political representation', or underground parliament. Apart from the Home Army, there was a department known as the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance'. One of its most important tasks was to organise underground tribunals to try Poles accused before it of collaboration with the enemy. The administration raised internal loans, issuing to those who had subscribed money 'bonds' consisting of a promise to repay after liberation. It was no fault of those who issued the 'bonds' that in 1945 there was no possibility of repayment. As the Germans had suppressed universities and state secondary schools, the underground administration organised secret schools and courses, even examinations at which qualified teachers and university professors secretly invigilated. There were many underground newspapers. The most important included the official organs of the Chief Delegate, *The Polish Republic*; of the Home Army, *Polish News*; and of the main political parties.<sup>1</sup>

The parties each organised at an early date their own illegal groups, including armed detachments. Thus the Peasant Party had its peasant forces, specially suited for armed actions in

<sup>1</sup> For an account by an eye-witness see Karski, *The Story of a Secret State*.

inaccessible country, and for protecting the peasants against German persecution. They played an important part at the time of the evictions of Polish peasants in the Lublin area during the winter of 1942-3. The Peasant Party's newspaper was entitled *Through Battle to Victory*. The Socialist Party was better qualified for sabotage and intelligence in the cities. At the beginning of the occupation its underground organisation took the name 'Liberty, Equality, Independence' (W.R.N.).<sup>1</sup> The purpose was to protect those who might be known to the Germans as members of the Socialist Party from arrest on suspicion of underground activity. The camouflage was of some value for the first months. By the time the Germans realised that W.R.N. and P.P.S. were the same, the best-known members of P.P.S. had gone into hiding. The Germans, however, captured and executed some of the best-known Polish democratic leaders, including Rataj of the Peasant Party and Niedzialkowski and Barlicki of P.P.S. The National Democratic Party, recruited partly from the peasantry and partly from the urban middle class, provided many of the technicians of the underground movement. The Labour Party played a smaller but no less honourable part.

By 1941 the four parties were collaborating closely and loyally. All four recognised the underground administration, and all four contributed their men to the Home Army. All four agreed that the new Poland must be a democratic country, and postponed detailed political differences until after victory. The rejection of the pre-war regime had already been clearly stated in the 1940 May Day proclamation of the Socialist Party. This had stressed the failure of the old ruling classes, and declared that the future belonged to the workers and peasants. It also stated that the Poles must live in harmony with the Jews, and 'learn to respect the aspiration to freedom of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian peoples'. A formal statement signed by the four parties together on 15 August 1943 emphasised that the government authorities of the future 'shall be free of those elements responsible for the mistakes of the former regime, and also free from any totalitarian leanings'. It urged that immediate steps be taken after liberation to carry out a land reform 'in order to create such divisions of arable land as shall ensure the largest possible number of efficient strong one-family farms, which would guarantee an adequate supply of food for the whole nation'. It also urged that the future government should take over industrial establishments admin-

<sup>1</sup> In Polish, 'Wolność, równość, niepodległość.'

istered by the Germans during the occupation, and stated that labour must be recognised as 'the greatest social value, and the foundation of the economic development and welfare of the country'. The 'political representation' was also renamed during 1943 the Council of National Unity.<sup>1</sup>

The German invasion of the Soviet Union greatly increased the military value of the Polish Home Army. During the following years the Poles performed valuable services by destroying rail communications in the rear of the German armies. At times they engaged in considerable battles with German troops. Owing to the different nature of the terrain, these were never on the scale of the battles of the Balkan resistance movements. One of the most important battles took place near Kielce in March 1944, when a force of some 4,000 S.S. troops were engaged. The Polish underground movement also carried out sabotage in factories, and passed valuable information to the Allies. As Poles were employed in industry throughout the Reich, they were able to inform the Allies also about conditions inside Germany. All these activities of course brought brutal reprisals on the population. Already in May 1940 the Germans were sufficiently alarmed by Polish resistance to carry out a special repressive movement, of arrests and executions, known as the 'A.B. Action'.<sup>2</sup> The Poles decided to fight reprisals with counter-reprisals. When Polish patriots were executed Polish resisters executed prominent German officials. Among those thus executed were Colonel Gassler, head of S.S. in Cracow, and General Kutschera, military commandant of Warsaw (1 February 1944). An attempt on Governor-General Hans Frank on 29 January 1944 was unsuccessful.

Special mention should be made of the resistance of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw from 19 to 28 April 1943, which was independent of the Home Army's actions. Of the 400,000 Jews who had inhabited this ghetto at the end of 1940, some 300,000 had been deported to extermination camps. The remnant were being slowly starved. When the Germans decided to finish them off, they resisted desperately, with no weapons. Of 56,000 persons accounted for in the official German report, 7,000 were killed fighting, while an unknown additional number perished in the sewers or in burning buildings. German losses were 15 dead. The German commander saw fit to congratulate his men on their heroism.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mikolajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination*, Appendix, quotes the text of the statement.

<sup>2</sup> *Trial*, part 12, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> *Trial*, part 2, pp. 405-7. See Karski, *op. cit.*, for an account of conditions in the Warsaw ghetto some months before the end.

The entry of the Red Army into former Polish territory early in 1944 created difficult problems. The Soviet government had broken off relations with the Polish government on 25 April 1943, and did not recognise as Polish any territory east of the Molotov-Ribbentrop line. Moreover in the advancing Soviet forces there were Polish divisions, under the command of General Berling, recognised by the Soviet authorities as being the true Polish army and owing some allegiance to a body called the Union of Polish Patriots, set up on Soviet initiative among the Polish subjects still resident in Soviet territory after the departure of the army of General Anders. In October 1943 the Polish government had instructed the underground leaders to intensify the struggle against the German forces, to avoid all conflicts with the Soviet authorities, and to co-operate with Soviet commanders if Polish-Soviet relations should be resumed. But this instruction had not overcome difficulties. For some time past the Red Army had been dropping parachutists, some of Polish and some of Russian nationality, behind the German lines in Poland to carry out sabotage. Their actions, which had not of course been co-ordinated with those of the Home Army, brought down reprisals on the local population. In some cases the Polish peasants had resisted these Soviet 'partisans'. An armed Polish organisation called N.S.Z. (National Armed Forces), which did not belong to the Home Army, and was composed of Polish nationalists of more or less fascist outlook, the descendants of the National Radicals of before the war, had fought against Soviet partisans, to the advantage of the Germans.

At the same time the Polish communists began activity. The Polish Communist Party, dissolved in 1938 by the Comintern itself, was revived in 1942 under the name Polish Workers' Party (P.P.R.), and a left-wing socialist group, claiming to be the true Socialist Party, was formed under a certain Osóbka-Morawski. This group took the name Polish Workers' Socialist Party (R.P.P.S.). Collaboration between R.P.P.S. and P.P.R. was close, but not always completely smooth. The former was accused by P.P.R. of containing former Trotskyists and also nationalistic elements.<sup>1</sup> R.P.P.S. violently attacked the old P.P.S. now known as W.R.N. The crime of W.R.N. was not any failure to resist the Germans or to defend Poland, but its 'anti-Soviet

<sup>1</sup> See Franciszek Józwiak, 'Na czele walki o wyzwolenie narodowe i społeczne (P.P.R. w okresie okupacji)' ('At the head of the fight for national and social liberation (P.P.R. in the period of occupation)'), article in *Nowe drogi*, December 1948, for the official Polish communist view.

attitude', as shown by its refusal to recognise as Soviet the territory given by Ribbentrop to Molotov and by its occasional references to the sufferings of Poles under Soviet occupation in the years 1939-41. From the supporters of P.P.R. and R.P.P.S. was formed a People's Army (A.L.), led by 'Rola', who later turned out to be a former general of the Polish army and personal enemy of Pilsudski named Zymierski. In December 1943 a secret meeting of representatives of these groups was held, which proceeded to set up a provisional 'people's parliament', called the National Council of the Homeland (K.R.N.). Early in 1944 representatives of this body reached Moscow. From them and from the Union of Polish Patriots was formed in July 1944 the 'Lublin Committee' which eventually became the government of Poland.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, on instructions from the Polish government in exile, the units of the Home Army operating east of the Molotov-Ribbentrop line fought the Germans and announced themselves to the Red Army when it arrived. The Red Army battle units were glad to co-operate with the Poles against the enemy, and to make use of their local information. But when areas were cleared of Germans, the Polish commanders, their identities and whereabouts now revealed, were arrested by the Soviet political authorities. Some were shot.<sup>1</sup>

The climax of the Polish resistance was the battle for Warsaw. Just as Paris rose before the arrival of the American and British forces and freed itself from the Germans, so Warsaw rose as the Red Army approached. But there the resemblance ended. The Red Army did not help the Poles, and after sixty-three days of heroic resistance, Warsaw surrendered to the Germans on 3 October. The reasons for this horrible tragedy have never been made fully clear. Perhaps the Red Army failed to cross the Vistula because it could not, because German resistance was too strong. But this the Soviet leaders, and their native and foreign propagandists, cannot admit: to them the invincibility of the Red Army is a dogma. Or it is possible that the front in Poland was temporarily depleted in order to send troops round through the gap in the German defences left by Rumania's defection of 23 August, which opened all Central Europe to the Soviet forces. This would have been a perfectly defensible military manoeuvre, and was also recommended by political considerations, as it gave Soviet troops a chance to get into the Balkan peninsula before their Western allies and rivals. But this again has not been given as the reason by Soviet propaganda. This propaganda instead has

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 155.

denounced General Komarowski ('Bór'), the Polish commander-in-chief, for plunging into an adventure without co-ordinating his action with the Soviet command. It does not explain how the general could have done this, in the absence of diplomatic relations between his government and the Soviet government, except by asking his government in exile, with which he had wireless contact, to communicate through the British government, and by attempting to make local contact with Marshal Rokossovsky's forces. Both these means General Bór used. A Captain Kalugin of Rokossovsky's army reached Warsaw, and sent a message to Stalin, through the London radio link, explaining the situation in Warsaw and the needs of the defenders. It, and the repeated representations by the British authorities, remained unanswered. Yet up till the outbreak of the rising the Polish broadcasts of the 'Kościuszko station', directed by the Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R., were urging Warsaw to rise against the Germans.

The rising started on 1 August. It was ordered by the Polish government in exile, with the agreement of the Delegate in Poland, the Home Council of Ministers under him, the Council of National Unity, and the Commander of the Home Army.<sup>1</sup> The regular units of the Home Army were three 'divisions' forming the 'Warsaw army corps' numbering 35,000 troops.<sup>2</sup> About one-third of their arms had been dropped by parachute from British and Polish aircraft based on the British Isles, one-third produced by underground arms plants organised by the resistance, and the rest mainly captured from the Germans in previous engagements. Apart from these regular units, most of the civil population, both male and female, joined in the rising, arranging hospitals, supplies, improvised fortifications and other essential services. The Germans used against them five divisions, including the S.S. 'Death's Head' and 'Viking' divisions. After a week they had succeeded in splitting up the Polish forces into four sections.

In response to Polish requests for help, the Allied governments asked the Soviet government to allow their aircraft to use Soviet aerodromes in order to operate a 'shuttle service' to help the insurgents. Whether from considerations of prestige<sup>3</sup> or other

<sup>1</sup> According to General Anders, *Army in Exile*, both he himself and General Sosnkowski were opposed to the rising.

<sup>2</sup> Zaremba, *Powstanie sierpniowe*, a pamphlet describing the rising, written by a prominent exiled socialist and based on the exiles' sources of information.

<sup>3</sup> The sensitiveness of the Red Army authorities in matters of prestige, and unwillingness to allow their allies to see the primitive conditions in which their troops lived, amounted almost to mania. It is not inconceivable that fear that American airmen might see the primitive airfields used for support operations near the front may have been an important factor in the refusal.

reasons, the Soviet government refused until 18 September. Meanwhile Polish, British and South African pilots based on Italy made several journeys in unusually risky conditions and with extremely high casualties. This help was of course on far too small a scale to influence the battle. In mid-September the Red Army captured Praga, the suburb immediately opposite Warsaw across the Vistula. Contact was for a time established, Soviet artillery fire was co-ordinated with Polish fighting, and a few supplies were dropped by Soviet planes, most of which were broken because no parachutes were attached. At the end of the month the Soviet forces ceased their frontal attack, and decided to bypass Warsaw in their advance. The Polish soldiers were reduced to two isolated groups, both cut off from the river.

When all resistance became hopeless, General Bór surrendered, in the hope of protecting the surviving civil population. The Germans had decided to recognise the Home Army as combatants, entitled to prisoner-of-war treatment. Eleven thousand soldiers, 942 officers and six generals were taken prisoner. According to the conditions of capitulation, there were to be no collective penalties for the civil population, nor were individual civilians to be punished for resistance activities during or before the rising. These conditions appear to some extent to have been observed. But Warsaw civilians were sent to forced labour in Germany in considerable numbers, and some were sent to Oświęcim concentration camp, which was little better than a death sentence. The fighting itself had destroyed Warsaw more thoroughly than any other great city in Europe.

The Warsaw rising killed off the flower of the Polish resistance movement. Yet even after these horrors the Home Army in the more westerly provinces continued the struggle. Despite the evidence of Soviet intentions towards Poland, the Home Army unlike Mihailović or the Ukrainian U.P.A. does not seem to have collaborated with the Germans.<sup>1</sup> In view of the Soviet attitude, the Polish government in December 1944 formally disbanded the Home Army, but a secret nucleus remained, determined to defend Poland's independence against all who should threaten it, including the Russians. In March 1945, when political talks were being

<sup>1</sup> The Polish communists have many times accused the Home Army of collaboration with the Germans. At some trials of 'conspirators'—for instance, that of Adam Doboszynski in July 1949—alleged evidence of such collaboration has been produced. In view of the circumstances surrounding these trials—Doboszynski, for instance, was in prison two years before he appeared in court—the assertions do not carry conviction.

prepared on the formation of a unified Polish government, the Red Army approached some members of the former Home Army with the offer to transport their leaders to Moscow to take part in these talks. Trusting this promise, the Commander of the Home Army, General Okulicki—who had succeeded the captured Bór-Komarowski—the Delegate Jankowski (national democrat) and the political leaders Pużak (P.P.S.), Bien (Peasant Party), and others revealed themselves to the N.K.V.D.<sup>1</sup> They disappeared for three months. Then, during the San Francisco conference of the United Nations, it was announced that they had been arrested for crimes against the Red Army, and would be tried by a Soviet court. The trial took place in Moscow in June 1945, at the very time that the unfortunate ex-premier Mikołajczyk was in Moscow discussing the new government. Of their hostility to the U.S.S.R. there was no doubt: that this should be considered a crime, punishable by a Soviet court, was a new principle. Okulicki was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, Jankowski to eight, the others to smaller periods.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the gallant resistance of the Poles to German occupation, which had never faltered and had rightly won the admiration of the democratic world, had ended with the obliteration of their capital and the establishment, not of the freedom for which they had fought, but of an imposed government which gave the heroes of resistance a choice between exile, outlawry or capitulation to the puppets of a foreign power.

#### YUGOSLAVIA

The first effect of defeat on the Yugoslavs, and especially on the Serbs, was depression and bewilderment. The Serbian Army, with its glorious traditions, had crumpled up in a few days. The state machine, which had seemed so powerful, and had been so heavy a burden on the citizen and peasant, was smashed to pieces. The political parties disintegrated. Families were divided by new frontiers. There was general disillusionment with the old political, military and bureaucratic chiefs, with the ruling class as a whole. There was disappointment with Britain, whom all had admired,

<sup>1</sup> People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, in 1946 renamed Ministry of Internal Affairs (M.V.D.). When first created in 1918 it was known as the Extraordinary Commission (Cheka), then became the State Political Administration (G.P.U.). The Ministry is a state within the Soviet state, controlling large territories as well as great numbers of employees and prisoners. It has its own armed forces, the 'Internal Troops' and the 'Frontier Troops', and its own units attached to the fighting troops and occupation forces of the regular army.

<sup>2</sup> The proceedings of the trial have been published in English under the title *The Trial of the Polish Conspirators*.

but which had given no help, and which now seemed threatened by great dangers of its own.

In April 1941 the Germans were in too great a hurry to push on into Greece, and later to prepare their invasion of Russia, to take thorough measures for the disarmament of the defeated Yugoslav army. Small units of that army, with their lighter weapons, took to the mountains and forests and awaited events. One of these units was commanded by Colonel Draža Mihailović, who in the early summer made his way from Hercegovina to Central Serbia.

The earliest active resistance was in Bosnia, where Serbs began to defend themselves with arms against the Ustash bands of Pavelić. The leaders were in some cases regular army or Chetnik officers, in others simply local men of initiative and courage. The groups included people of all social classes and most political opinions. Their motive was protection of themselves and their families. In so far as they had a common political idea, it was nationalism and hostility to the Croats as such.

The whole situation was transformed by the German invasion of Russia. Throughout Yugoslavia, and particularly in the Serbian provinces, sympathy for Russia was deep-rooted and traditional. The Serbs not only loved Russia, but greatly overestimated her strength. The mood of the Serbian people now suddenly changed from bewildered despair to extravagant optimism. Now at last the Serbs had a great ally on land, who would destroy the Germans and liberate Yugoslavia within a few weeks. Meanwhile it was their duty to do what they could by resistance to help their 'big brother'. The new mood was fully exploited by the Yugoslav Communist Party, which for some time had been building up an underground military organisation. The attack on Russia was the signal for action.

In July fighting began in Serbia. It was due partly to communist planning and partly to the spontaneous reaction of the peasants, who, carried away by patriotic fervour and the optimism of the moment, joined any bands in their neighbourhood—communist, Chetnik, regular army remnants, or any other—which seemed likely to fight the Germans. The enemy was taken by surprise, and his forces in Serbia were soon confined to the neighbourhood of Belgrade and the Morava valley.

The communist forces took the name of partisans.<sup>1</sup> They were

<sup>1</sup> The origin of the word 'partisan' is uncertain. It was used in the Russo-French campaign of 1812 to describe the guerrilla forces of Denis Davidov (see, *inter alia*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace*). It was also used in the American Civil War.

directed by a 'Supreme Staff' which took all political and military decisions. The leader of the whole movement was Joseph Broz, the Secretary-General of the party, soon known by his *nom de guerre* of Tito. In accordance with the official Comintern policy of a People's Front of all patriotic forces against the invaders, the communist leaders approached the nationalist resistance groups with suggestions for common action. Tito had several conversations with Colonel Mihailović between September and November. Mihailović was against large-scale armed resistance, on the grounds that the Yugoslavs could not stand up to the Germans with inadequate equipment, and that the invaders would carry out merciless reprisals on the civil population. He believed that they should husband their resources, and await a more suitable moment when a general revolt could be launched. But when, despite his wishes, fighting broke out on a large scale, he was forced to join in, and for a time his forces co-operated with the partisans.

This did not last long. There were many minor causes of conflict between the partisans and Mihailović, but the essential cause was the incompatibility of their political outlook. To Mihailović, trained as a regular officer in the army of King Alexander, the communists were godless, lawless and immoral criminals, with whom no decent patriot could associate. The communists were no less intolerant. To them Mihailović represented the 'reactionary old regime'. He was a symbol of military dictatorship, administrative corruption, social and legal injustice, exploitation of the poor. Each side accused the other of having first attacked, and it is impossible to say with certainty what are the facts.<sup>1</sup> By the middle of November they were irreconcilable enemies. First the partisans beat Mihailović. Then during November the Germans, who had brought up considerable reinforcements, attacked on a serious scale, using armour and aircraft. By the end of the month the partisans were driven from their base at Užice, and fled in confusion to the south. Mihailović's forces also disintegrated, and many of his men joined the troops of General Nedić.

The suppression of the revolt in Serbia was followed by a massacre. Thousands of Serbs were shot or hanged, and thousands more were arrested, maltreated and imprisoned or deported to forced labour. The worst atrocities occurred in the industrial

<sup>1</sup> For a balanced view of this question see Clissold, *Whirlwind*, pp. 58-74. For the communist version, see Tito, *Report to the 5th Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party*, and for the Mihailović version, Martin, *Ally Betrayed*.

town of Kragujevac, where 8,000 people are believed to have been shot, including several hundred school-children. Bitter hatred was created against the Germans, but there was at the same time resentment against the partisans because they had failed to fulfil their high hopes, and had brought suffering on innocent people.

Uncoordinated fighting against Ustash bands continued in Bosnia, but the only other area besides Serbia where a major revolt took place in 1941 was Montenegro. Here a rising broke out on 13 July, in which communists and nationalists fought side by side. The Italians were at first driven from all but the coastal regions, but then brought reinforcements and aircraft, and reconquered most of the province. During the winter the communists and nationalists quarrelled. As in Serbia, the causes were partly ideological and partly connected with the question of reprisals. The nationalists went over to the Italians and helped them 'keep order' against the communists.<sup>1</sup>

The defeat in Serbia taught the partisans that they could not face the Germans in open country, and that it was unwise to operate in areas where they could not protect the civil population. From now onwards they abandoned the plainlands, and withdrew to the central mountain massif of Bosnia, Hercegovina and Montenegro.

Three separate sections of Yugoslavia were of strategic interest to the enemy—the Slavonian plain, the Morava and Vardar valleys, and the Adriatic coast. The first affected communications between Austria and the Black Sea, and the second communications with Greece and Turkey, while the third was regarded as a possible objective for an Allied landing. Between these three sections lay the mountain stronghold of the partisans. Within this area the partisans were a constant menace to the invaders, and from the end of 1943 onwards they extended their activities outside it, into the strategic areas. Within the mountain area, movements of enemy troops and supplies always needed strong guards. The few railways and roads which cross the mountain barrier, and link the Danubian plain with the coast, were constantly cut. Attacks were also made, from the north Bosnian ranges and from the outlying base in the Slavonian hills, on the main Zagreb-Belgrade railway, the most important single line in south-eastern Europe. Factories and mines were raided and put out of action for weeks at a time. Smaller enemy units were

<sup>1</sup> Clissold, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-85.

surrounded and destroyed, and arms and ammunition stores captured. Considerable numbers of enemy troops, dearly needed on other fronts, were permanently tied down.<sup>1</sup>

The partisans as far as possible avoided engaging strong enemy forces. But from time to time the Axis Command undertook major 'cleaning-up' operations. The partisans then had to defend themselves, break up into smaller formations and scatter into the least accessible fastnesses. These enemy 'offensives' caused the partisans heavy losses, and on one occasion at least their main force narrowly escaped annihilation.<sup>2</sup> But each time they survived, and the cost to the enemy was also severe.

Outside the central mountain area there were three regions in which partisan activity was of political as well as military importance—Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia.

In Slovenia, a Liberation Front was formed, led by communists but supported by various liberal and even some Catholic organisations. This front organised the partisan forces, maintaining close contact with Tito's headquarters. In the summer of 1942 the Italians conducted serious operations against them but did not destroy them. At the time of the Italian surrender in September 1943 they were in a position to take over the greater part of the former Italian zone, and to extend their activities to the Slovene-inhabited areas of Venezia Giulia, the province taken by Italy in 1918 from Austria. The first flush of victory gave them great popularity. But after a time the old political quarrels between clericals and left broke out again. The communists abused their power, and the influence of the priests was turned

<sup>1</sup> It is of course impossible to say what proportion of the enemy troops in Yugoslavia were tied down by partisan activities, what proportion by the fear of future Mihailović activities, and what proportion to ensure against possible future allied landings in the Balkans. Tito's propagandists exaggerate their number, and claim every enemy soldier serving in Yugoslavia as the result of their prowess. Writers determined to depict Tito and his men as pitch-black villains, e.g. F. A. Voigt, *Pax Britannica*, deny them any merit at all in holding down the enemy. The truth is obviously, in general terms, that the enemy was bound in any case to keep some troops there, but that their number was notably increased as a result of partisan action. It is also of course true that if Tito and Mihailović had not fought each other the enemy would have had to send still more troops. The blame for this cannot be exclusively placed on either side, but in my opinion more blame should attach to Mihailović than to Tito.

<sup>2</sup> The partisans themselves speak of seven main enemy 'offensives'. The first was in Serbia in 1941, the second in Bosnia in early 1942, the third in Montenegro in June 1942, the fourth in Hercegovina and the Dalmatian and Montenegrin hinterlands in January–April 1943, the fifth in Montenegro in June–July 1943. The sixth and seventh were in 1944, on a considerable scale but in less clearly defined areas. The fourth and fifth were the most severe. British officers were with the partisan forces during the first and the fifth. For further details see Clissold, *op. cit.* For enemy evidence on the fourth offensive see the Mussolini–Hitler correspondence, pp. 132–5, 142–3, 156–9. See also p. 128 below.

against them. During the early winter of 1943-4 the Germans drove the partisans from most of the territory they had gained, and organised a quisling Slovene armed force under the former Yugoslav General Rupnik, which extended over all Slovenia, now united within the German Reich. But the gains derived by the partisans from the Italian surrender in the form of arms and recruits were of lasting value, and they were never again threatened with complete destruction.

In Croatia a communist underground organisation existed from the beginning, but considerable partisan forces did not appear until the summer of 1942. Though at first mainly recruited from the Serbian minority in Dalmatia, they did not wreak vengeance on Croats as such, but preached the unity of Serbs and Croats in resistance to the invaders and their helpers. They also appealed by their radical social slogans to the revolutionary traditions of the Croatian peasant movement, which had been somewhat neglected by the Peasant Party leaders since the death of the Radić brothers, but had remained strong among the peasants themselves. And so gradually the Croatian peasants, finding themselves forced to take sides in the struggle that was raging through the land, and preferring the partisans to their rivals, began to enter Tito's ranks.

In Macedonia the entry of the Bulgarians had at first been received with enthusiasm, but this soon gave place to disappointment. The Sofia government treated Macedonia as a simple province of Bulgaria, and there was no more talk of regional autonomy. The old Serbian officials were expelled, but their places were taken not by local men but by Bulgarians. Even the returning Macedonian exiles seemed strangers. The Bulgarian dictatorship was as oppressive as the Yugoslav had been, and economic conditions grew worse as the war dragged on. There could be no popular reaction in favour of the old 'Great Serb' chauvinism, but there was strong discontent with 'Great Bulgarian' chauvinism. For a time the underground organisations of both the Yugoslav and the Bulgarian Communist Parties claimed the right to lead the communist movement in Macedonia. They appealed to the authority of the Comintern in Moscow. It decided in favour of the Yugoslav party.<sup>1</sup> The Yugoslav party put forth the slogan of a federal Yugoslavia, with home rule for the 'Macedonian nation' on a level of equality with the other nations. The slogan

<sup>1</sup> See Elisabeth Barker, *Macedonia* (R.I.I.A., 1950), pp. 83-109, for relations between the two communist parties.

became popular. The underground organisation grew, and in the summer of 1943 partisan bands were operating west of the Vardar. They accepted the leadership of Tito, who sent his representative Vukmanović ('Tempo') to help their organisation. From 1943 they maintained liaison with the partisans of Albania (L.N.C.), Greece (E.L.A.S.) and Bulgaria (O.F.).

In Serbia communist sympathisers remained quiet throughout 1942 and 1943. In the spring of 1944 they began activity again, and received much help from the Allies, who were especially interested in the communications system of Serbia. In the autumn strong forces of Tito's main army, led by the Montenegrin communist general Peko Dapčević and consisting largely of men from Serbia who had left their homes with the partisans in 1941 or had later gone to Bosnia to join them, liberated all Western Serbia, while the Red Army marched on Belgrade. In the Voivodina, the nature of the terrain and the efficiency of German and Hungarian control made guerrilla warfare very difficult.<sup>1</sup> But many Serbs from Voivodina went to Bosnia, and formed there a 'Voivodina division' to fight with the main partisan forces.

As the National Liberation Movement developed, and considerable territories were liberated, the practical tasks of civil administration became urgent. To deal with these, National Liberation Committees were created, for villages, districts and regions. In theory they were elected by the population: in practice the electors and candidates were inevitably limited to supporters of the partisans, who in some liberated areas formed a majority, and in others only a small minority. The tasks of the committees were to direct agriculture, primitive industrial enterprises, and recruitment and supplies for the army. They also organised anti-illiteracy campaigns and political propaganda. Several newspapers were regularly published.

National Liberation Committees were also created in enemy-occupied areas by the underground Communist Party. Their functions included raising of funds and recruits for the partisan forces in the mountains, smuggling of food and medical supplies into liberated territory, and provision of information on enemy intentions and movements. They also undertook sabotage in some industrial centres and on some sectors of enemy-controlled railways. Throughout most of the war, the main partisan force

<sup>1</sup> For an eye-witness account see Basil Davidson, *Partisan Picture*, pp. 238-70. Mr. Davidson personally took part, as a British liaison officer, in the exceptionally hazardous work in Hungarian-occupied territory.

was operating in the so-called 'passive regions' of Bosnia, Hercegovina, Dalmatia and Montenegro, regions which in normal times do not produce enough food to support their population. Thus a part of the partisans' supplies had to be smuggled, at great risk, by the peasants from the fertile plains of the Sava into the mountains. This is in itself an interesting indication of the degree of support which the partisans at this time enjoyed from the peasants.

At the beginning of the revolt in 1941, the partisans obtained a certain quantity of arms from Yugoslav army stores. From September to November 1941 the arms factory in Užice worked for them. But after the defeat in Serbia they were obliged to seek opportunities of surrounding small enemy garrisons and capturing arms dumps. In September 1943 the surrender of several Italian divisions provided much greater booty, and allowed the equipment of large numbers of new recruits.

In November 1942 at Bihać in Bosnia a conference was held of delegates from liberated, and also supposedly from occupied, territory. They included several well-known members of the Croatian Peasant, Independent Democratic, Agrarian, Democratic and Moslem parties, but the majority, and the most active, were communists or communist sympathisers. The congress elected a body called the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia, known by the initials of its Serbo-Croat words as A.V.N.O.J. The Council was intended to act as a central organ of government for all liberated territory, give directives to the local committees, and co-ordinate their work. It issued a six-point programme, which was broadcast by the Soviet-controlled 'Free Yugoslavia' radio station,<sup>1</sup> and which included respect for private property; postponement of radical social changes until national elections could be held after victory 'except for the replacing of reactionary village authorities and gendarmes by popularly elected representatives' in liberated territory; and guarantee of equal national rights to all 'peoples of Yugoslavia', specifically mentioning Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins.

. . . . .  
<sup>1</sup> The 'Free Yugoslavia' station is believed to have been located in or near Tiflis. Its broadcasts, though highly coloured with propaganda, gave circumstantial accounts of guerrilla operations a few days after they had taken place. This seems to me conclusive proof that direct radio contact was maintained, during at least the greater part of the partisan war, between Tito's headquarters and the Soviet Union.

The Serbian nationalist followers of Mihailović are often described as 'Chetniks'. This word requires a brief explanation. Literally it means a member of a Cheta, which is the Serbian word for an armed band. Such armed bands had played an important part in Serbian history, especially in irregular warfare against the Turks up to and during the Balkan wars. When Serbia became Yugoslavia, the Chetniks became an official organisation. Led by veterans of irregular warfare, and closely connected with the regular army, the Chetnik organisation was intended to give its members a training in guerrilla activities. In 1941 the leader of the Chetnik organisation was Kosta Pećanac, a hero of the First World War. He played no part in the brief campaign of April 1941, and in the summer he went over to the Germans, and appealed to his followers to behave in a 'loyal' manner towards the occupying forces. Those who followed him were recognised by the Nedić government and the Germans, and operated with the title of 'legal Chetniks' until December 1942, when they were formally incorporated into Nedić's own armed forces. Those who rejected Pećanac's appeal were known as 'illegal Chetniks'. It was they who followed Mihailović.

In the early period of Yugoslav resistance, communications between the provinces of the dismembered country were difficult and slow. The only non-Axis source of news which was accessible throughout the country was the B.B.C. news in Serbo-Croatian. It was when the B.B.C. began to speak of Mihailović's supposed achievements, in the autumn of 1941, that his name, hitherto little known in the country, became a force, and that people from the different provinces attempted to get in touch with him. This tendency further increased when in January 1942 the Yugoslav government in exile appointed Mihailović its War Minister. This announcement came at a time when Mihailović had been beaten by the partisans and then attacked by the Germans, many of his men had deserted to the Nedić formations or gone home, and only a very small number remained under his command. It was at this time that the Serbian nationalist bands operating in Dalmatia, Bosnia, Hercegovina and Montenegro sought contact with him.

Ever since the partition of Yugoslavia, the Italian occupation authorities in Dalmatia had shown a certain tolerance towards the Serbian nationalists, as a counter-balance against the Croats, who might be expected to be irredentists. Serbian refugees from Bosnia were welcomed in the Italian zone. Both the refugees and

the Serbian element among the resident population of the zone were allowed to organise bands of their own, under Italian command, and were supplied with food, clothes and arms by the Italian army. At first the intention of the Italians was to use these Serbs against any raiding Ustash bands from Pavelić's territory. But after a time the danger from the Ustash was surpassed by the danger from the partisans, who began to be active in the Dalmatian and Hercegovinian mountains. The Italians then used the Serbian formations against the partisans. They received the title Anti-Communist Militia. A similar situation developed in Montenegro, where, as we have seen, the nationalists, after an initial phase of co-operation with the partisans, had quarrelled with them. These nationalists co-operated ever more closely with the Italians, receiving from them, like their colleagues in Dalmatia and Hercegovina, Italian army rations, arms, clothing and identity cards.

When these men heard that Mihailović had been appointed War Minister, they sought contact with him. Despite their co-operation with the Italians, they still more or less regarded the exiles as their government. They were not sure who would win the war. As long as their relations with the Italians were good, they would not suffer under the Axis occupation. On the other hand, if the Allies should win, they could justify themselves by proving that they had accepted Mihailović, the nominee of London, as their commander. For his part, Mihailović could not afford to spurn their help. He had few men of his own, and without the protection of the collaborationist Chetnik leaders could hardly hope to survive. In return for their formal allegiance and practical protection, he approved their policy of co-operation with the Italians against the partisans. As a matter of fact, he was not at all inclined to object to this policy. His appointment as War Minister had conferred on him a political rather than a military status. He felt himself the legal representative in the homeland of the king and the government, entrusted with the defence of their interests. The occupying forces were, in his view, too powerful to resist at this stage of the war. They would go when the main German and Italian armies were defeated by the Great Allies. But there were two political enemies who would not automatically disappear with the collapse of the Axis, and whom it was his duty as representative of the government to combat—the Croats and the communists. If help could be obtained from the Italians against them, it should not be rejected. In reasoning

thus, it does not seem to have occurred to Mihailović<sup>1</sup> that he could be guilty of treason, for to him the internal and the foreign enemy were objects of equal hatred. He assumed that this was also the view of the government in exile, which had never reproached him for his anti-Croat and anti-communist policy, of which he had reason to believe that it was fully informed. On the contrary, that section of the B.B.C. Yugoslav broadcasts which was controlled by the exiled government unreservedly commended all his actions.

The co-operation of Mihailović with the Italians against the partisans was much more than a matter of 'accommodations'. In January 1943, Chetnik forces, clothed, fed and armed from Italian army supplies, were transported in Italian army trucks over large distances to fight the partisans in the Neretva valley. Mihailović personally directed the operations of the Chetniks. He moved his headquarters to the front, and refused to allow officers of the British mission to accompany him.<sup>2</sup> The fighting in the Neretva valley was the biggest military effort put up by Mihailović's Chetniks in the whole war. About 15,000 men fought hard and well—on the enemy side, as part of a large-scale operation jointly planned by the Axis Command.<sup>3</sup>

In the summer of 1943 Mihailović left Montenegro, and with a much reduced force, now accompanied once more by the British mission, set up his headquarters in south-west Serbia. Here he made firmer contact with those Chetnik commanders who had remained at large in Serbia since the disaster of autumn 1941. These men had fought occasional skirmishes with German or Bulgarian troops, but avoided battle whenever possible. They had seldom fought partisans, because there had been few partisans in Serbia. From the spring of 1943 British missions had been attached to several of their headquarters. When Italy surrendered

<sup>1</sup> Colonel S. W. Bailey, head of the British Mission to Mihailović in 1942-3, declared that Mihailović had made to him statements to this effect in the village of Lipova in Montenegro on 23 February 1943 (statement by Colonel Bailey to the Press, 14 June 1946). Constantine Fotić, Yugoslav Ambassador in the United States during the war and a fervent Serbian nationalist and supporter of Mihailović, maintains in his book *The War we Lost* that Colonel Bailey misunderstood Mihailović's remarks about the Italians. Even if—as is not very probable—Colonel Bailey's knowledge of Serbo-Croat let him down on this point, Mr. Fotić's version in no way disputes the attitude to Croats and communists described above nor denies that Mihailović prevented the British mission from accompanying him when he left his headquarters for military operations. These operations, as the mission later found out despite the silence and obstruction of Mihailović and his officers, were directed not against the invaders but against the partisans, in close co-ordination with Italian, German and Croatian fascist forces.

<sup>2</sup> See Bailey statement, 14 June 1946.

<sup>3</sup> These operations constituted what the partisans called the 'fourth offensive'. See above, p. 122, footnote 2.

the Chetnik leaders who remained in Dalmatia, Hercegovina and Montenegro believed for a few weeks that British and American troops would land in Yugoslavia. But when it became clear that this would not happen, and that meanwhile the partisans had greatly strengthened themselves by acquiring Italian war material, they decided to co-operate with the Germans, who with the Ustash now overran the former Italian zone. Mihailović was pressed by the Allied Command to undertake some operations against Axis communications in Serbia. The only result achieved was the destruction of an important bridge over the Lim east of Višegrad, which was carried out by Mihailović's men in the presence of the British mission officers in the first week of October 1943.<sup>1</sup> But requests for attack on the more vital railways running through Serbia were evaded or refused.

Eventually a breach between the Allies and Mihailović became inevitable. No material support had been given to him since the summer of 1943. After a number of delays due to technical difficulties, in May 1944 the British mission was withdrawn from Mihailović. A small American mission stayed some months longer. During the summer the penetration of the partisans into Serbia caused even the independent Serbian Chetniks to collaborate with the German and Bulgarian occupation troops. When the Red Army entered Serbia, some Chetnik units at the last moment turned their arms against the Germans and went over to the Russians. Others retreated westwards with the Germans. When finally in April 1945 the Germans abandoned Yugoslav territory, some Chetniks retreated with them, and surrendered to the British or Americans in Italy or Austria. Others, including Mihailović himself, remained in Bosnia.<sup>2</sup>

It would be wrong to conclude from these facts that Mihailović, and the Chetniks who recognised his leadership, were 'pro-

<sup>1</sup> The Višegrad exploit was attributed in error to the partisans by a B.B.C. broadcast. This mistake caused great rage among supporters of Mihailović (e.g. Martin, *op. cit.*, and Voigt, *op. cit.*). They are perhaps not aware that in 1941-2 B.B.C. broadcasts attributed to Mihailović's forces many exploits of Tito. The B.B.C. was also used by the Yugoslav government in exile to announce decorations of Chetnik officers who were fighting on the enemy side and degradations of regular Yugoslav army officers who were fighting with the partisans against the enemy. Thus the B.B.C. broadcasts won the hatred of both sides in the Yugoslav civil war. Personally I consider that the B.B.C. deserves little blame for this. It was obliged to accept the information given to it by those more familiar with Yugoslav affairs. These in turn had to rely on irregular and imperfect sources of information. In my opinion the services of the B.B.C. in maintaining the morale of occupied Europe far outweigh its mistakes, and those British who accept with enthusiasm the criticisms of foreign sectional interests against the British radio only expose their own lack of judgment. (See also Clissold, *op. cit.*, p. 127.)

<sup>2</sup> Clissold, *op. cit.*, chapter 15.

German'. He hated the Germans, and was a friend of Britain, which he believed would win the war. He believed, however, that the government in exile, and its British hosts, wished him to fight the communists. He simply refused to believe that the Western Powers considered the Soviet Union as an ally, or wished in Yugoslavia a united front of all patriots against the Axis. When he was assured of this officially, he brushed it away as a piece of diplomatic cunning by the British to 'keep the Soviets sweet'. Up to the end, he gave concrete proof of his sympathy for the Western Allies, of which the most important was the rescue of a large number of Allied pilots who had baled out over Yugoslavia on flights to Central Europe. These men were treated with great hospitality, and delivered to the Allied authorities even after the Allied governments had broken relations with him.<sup>1</sup> For their part, the Germans never trusted Mihailović. In the early part of the war they regarded him as a dangerous enemy. Later, they made local agreements with individual Chetnik leaders in Bosnia, Dalmatia and Hercegovina whom they must have known owed allegiance to him, but they refused to have dealings with him or recognise his status as a commander. Only in the last phase, when Belgrade had fallen, did they make direct contact with him, and the contact did not lead to direct collaboration between him and them.<sup>2</sup>

Mihailović's policy has been defended on the grounds that he wished to spare the Serbian people reprisals and casualties, and that the guerrilla methods used by the partisans wasted valuable lives. But in fact Mihailović did not spare Serbian lives. His desire to avoid casualties conflicted with his political aim, described above, of destroying the partisans. It was the second motive which prevailed. He used his men, at the cost of heavy losses, to fight on the Axis side against Tito. The result was to double Serbian casualties, because partisan Serbs had to fight not only the invaders but also Chetnik Serbs.<sup>3</sup> Brother fought brother, and

<sup>1</sup> With Mihailović's ready co-operation, American aircraft evacuated airmen from landing-strips in his territory as late as the summer of 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Clissold, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-17.

<sup>3</sup> It has often been suggested that whereas Mihailović's forces consisted of Serbs, those of Tito were mostly Croats, Slovenes or Macedonians. Only the first part of this statement is true. The first partisan forces, in Serbia in 1941, consisted almost entirely of Serbs, some hundreds of whom, the veterans of the four years of guerrilla war, survived to the end, fighting in various parts of Yugoslavia. After 1941, the partisan forces were mainly recruited in Bosnia and Montenegro, both regions of predominantly Serbian population. Even in Croatia proper, the first partisan units were formed from the Serbian minority. Only from the end of 1943 did Croats join the partisan forces in considerable numbers. The truth is that both the strongest supporters and the strongest enemies of Tito were Serbs. The war against the Axis invaders was also a Serbian civil war.

the enemy's military commitments in Yugoslavia were lightened.

In contrast to Montenegro and Bosnia, there were parts of Serbia where Chetniks ruled considerable areas, independently of the occupying forces and of the Nedić authorities, who did not find it worth while to interfere with them, as they were not attacked by them. These Chetniks formed a buffer between the Germans and the civil population. At their best, they genuinely protected the peasants, and were very popular. At their worst, they were mere local war-lords, exploiting the peasants no less ruthlessly for their personal advantage than did the Germans for theirs.<sup>1</sup> This state of affairs came to an end in the spring of 1944, when the Serbian Chetniks became involved in military action against the revived Serbian partisans. On the other hand, from 1943 onwards the partisans made great efforts to protect the civil population, by threatening counter-reprisals on captured Axis personnel, by evacuating and caring for civilians when they abandoned an area, and by special efforts to prevent wounded or sick persons from falling into enemy hands.

#### GREECE

After the defeat of April 1941, Greece was occupied by troops of three Powers. The greater part of the country was ruled by the Italians. The Germans held Crete and some of the other islands and the province of Evros on the Turkish frontier. They also had garrisons in Salonica and Athens. The Bulgarians had eastern Macedonia and Thrace. In one sense the Bulgarian occupation was the worst: the Bulgarians were permanent neighbours, and intended to keep the territory they had acquired. They began to expel Greeks from Thrace and to replace them with Bulgarian colonists, some of whom had come from Thrace in 1913 and had since lived as refugees in Bulgaria. But for brutality in administration there was little to choose between the three occupying Powers. It could be expected that, whatever the outcome of the war, the Germans and Italians would go—though Italy would probably keep some islands to round off her position in the Adriatic and Dodecanese, and might annex part of Epirus to Albania—whereas the Bulgarians would stay. But meanwhile all three were equally oppressive. The Germans affected some superficial politeness and a respect for Greek civilisation, but in prac-

<sup>1</sup> The best type of Chetnik commander is described in Rootham, *Missfire*. Mr. Rootham spent a year as a liaison officer with Chetnik units in north-east Serbia. An example of the 'war-lord' type was Keserović, who for a long time ruled the Kopaonik area of western Serbia.

tice they were ruthless to any sign of opposition. The Italians were more arrogant, and if their repression was less efficient that won them little sympathy from the Greeks.

In the first year of occupation the Greeks suffered more from economic than from military causes. Greece could never feed its population. The occupiers made little provision to feed the conquered, and blamed the results on the Allied blockade. In the winter of 1941-2 there was starvation in Athens. At the pressing request of the Greek government in exile, the Western Allies agreed to make an exception. Grain was supplied from Canada and the United States, and distributed with German permission by the International Red Cross. In 1942 there was an economic recovery. Construction works for the occupying armies gave employment, and both wages and profits were good. The professional class and civil servants fared less well. By 1943 inflation of the currency became serious, and in 1944 it leaped ahead. As usual in such situations, the middle class suffered most.

The defeat of the Greek army had also been the defeat of the Metaxas royalist dictatorship, which had had many enemies. The Axis Powers were able for a time to exploit this to their advantage. They showed some tolerance to republicans. Though the latter sympathised strongly with the Western Powers, the fact that they were not maltreated by the occupiers at least removed an incentive to active resistance. It was the starvation of the first winter which created bitter hatred of the Axis, especially in the towns. The organisation best fitted for active resistance was the Communist Party. Like its sister party in Yugoslavia, it had opposed 'imperialist war-mongers' of either side until June 1941, but in the last months it had been somewhat more anti-Axis than anti-British. Both the obvious facts and the mood of the people showed that those who most gravely threatened the Greek people were the Axis. When Hitler attacked Russia the communists' doubts were removed. They began to organise a Popular Front to oppose the Axis. In September 1941 was formally founded the National Liberation Front (E.A.M.). It included the Communist Party (K.K.E.), three communist-controlled puppet parties, and two small but genuine parties.<sup>1</sup> It put forward the usual Popular Front programme of national independence, democratic liberties and resistance to the enemy. It was to organise civil and armed resistance—strikes, non-co-operation and guerrilla bands.

<sup>1</sup> The most important was the socialist group led by Professor Svolos and Mr. Tsirimokos.

Guerrilla was an old Greek tradition. The Greek mountains have probably never been entirely free of bandits. When the Greek army surrendered, a good many arms were hidden. During 1942 armed bands came into being in central Greece. In April 1942 E.A.M. announced the formation of a People's Liberation Army (E.L.A.S.) but this did not really take shape until the following year. In the autumn of 1942 the most important bands were led by a communist, Velouchiotis, who bore as a pseudonym the name of the old Greek war-god Ares, and by Colonel Napoleon Zervas. Ares's band was the nucleus from which developed E.L.A.S., the Communist Party's private army. Zervas's forces owed a somewhat uncertain allegiance to a political organisation called E.D.E.S. (National Democratic Greek Union). The nominal head of E.D.E.S. was General Plastiras, the republican officer who had made the *coup d'état* of 1922, and was living in exile in Vichy France. E.D.E.S. stood for a republican, democratic, non-socialist regime. The course of the resistance war, and the growing power of the communists, made it more anti-communist than anything else. There was always a certain difference between E.D.E.S. leaders in Athens and Zervas's command in the mountains. This difference became wider as time went on.

In the autumn of 1942 a party of British parachutists was dropped in Greece, and made contact with both Ares and Zervas. On 24 November the combined bands attacked the important railway bridge over the Gorgopotamos river, and British sappers blew it up. In the following months British parties were dropped to a series of bands in Greece. As in Yugoslavia, wireless contact with Middle East headquarters made possible the supply of arms, explosives and other supplies by air. By the summer of 1943 there were two large resistance forces in the country.

E.L.A.S. had perhaps 20,000 men. It was well organised in the Pindus, western Thessaly and central Macedonia, and had some forces in the Peloponnese. It had a central headquarters, to which was attached a British mission, with authority over the British missions attached to various regional E.L.A.S. commands.<sup>1</sup> The commander of the British mission for the first year was Brigadier E. Myers, and for the second year Colonel C. M.

<sup>1</sup> The most authoritative work in English on the Greek resistance and Greek politics immediately after the war is C. M. Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord*. A useful shorter account is MacNeill, *The Greek Dilemma*.

Woodhouse. E.L.A.S. commands at regional and national level were organised on a tripartite basis. There was a military commander, a political representative, and a 'kapetanios'. The kapetanios was responsible for supplies and morale, the military commander for the conduct of operations, while the political representative was the real chief of the whole force. At E.L.A.S. headquarters the military commander was General Sarafis, a regular officer of republican sympathies, who had led a band of his own, was captured by E.L.A.S., and given the alternative of death or command of their forces. The kapetanios was Ares. The political representative was Siantos, a veteran communist who had been general secretary of K.K.E. in the twenties and had escaped from Italian imprisonment in 1941. The party's general secretary in the thirties had been Zachariades, who was in Dachau concentration camp from 1941 until the end of the war.

The forces of Zervas were less numerous, less well organised, and had no such complicated hierarchy. Their stronghold was Epirus. There were also some minor resistance organisations in other areas. E.K.K.A. was led by Colonel Psaros, and a young politician Kartalis. It had a republican and democratic programme similar to that of E.D.E.S. P.A.O. was a nationalist and right-wing organisation in Salonica. It was more political than military. It never achieved much armed effort. In Thrace there was a nationalist band led by an army sergeant named Anton Tsaous. There was surprisingly little armed activity in Thrace. Kavala, with its tobacco-working industry, had always been a communist stronghold. But E.L.A.S. never had important forces here. In the autumn of 1941 there had been a communist rising, in which both Greeks and Bulgarians had taken part, and which the Bulgarian army had suppressed. After that there was little. It is possible that a reason for this was uncertainty in the minds of Greek communist leaders whether after the war Thrace would be in Greece or Bulgaria. Certainly the Soviet government was uncertain about this, and it is not unlikely that the uncertainty was reflected in communist policy.<sup>1</sup>

The immediate concern of the British Command in the Middle East was to increase the commitments of the Axis troops all over the Mediterranean area. Peiraeus was used by Axis ships supplying the army in Libya. Greek organisations were encouraged to sabotage this shipping. The Axis by 1943 suffered from an all-round shortage of manpower. Every additional unit tied down in

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 246.

Greece relaxed pressure on the Allies in North Africa and in Russia. Moreover the Axis had to reckon not only with Greek resistance but also with the possibility of an Allied landing on the Greek coast. In the summer of 1943 the British Command ordered a special effort of guerrilla warfare and sabotage of communications, in order to attract a maximum of Axis troops into Greece. The defeat of the Axis in Tunisia was clearly to be followed by a landing somewhere in the Mediterranean. The guerrilla operations in Greece were to be a 'cover plan' to make the Axis expect action in Greece while action was in fact being prepared for Sicily. Maximum guerrilla effort required maximum unity between the bands. The British mission therefore pressed the Greeks to make a 'National Bands Agreement' for common action against the enemy, despite political disagreements. E.L.A.S. at first consented, but then refused to sign. Individual bands, however, including local E.L.A.S. bands, with the advice and in some cases leadership of British officers, did substantially harry the enemy and so help Allied military plans.

As the tide of war turned, it became more important for E.L.A.S. to eliminate their rivals than to combat the enemy, who was clearly not going to win. Ultimate political power in Greece required also that E.L.A.S. should minimise its casualties. From this time onwards, E.L.A.S. showed growing reluctance to carry out the operations proposed by the British mission. Zervas on the other hand was co-operative. With 5,000 men to 20,000 of E.L.A.S., and concentrated in a strategically unimportant part of Greece, he could not hope to win post-war power unaided. British help was essential to him, so he must gain British gratitude.

Behind these military reasons for friction between the British and E.L.A.S., and British support to Zervas, lay deeper political reasons. All communists hated Britain as the greatest Imperial Power, and Greek communists were no exception. British soldiers might get on well with individual communists, but the British government could not favour the establishment of a communist, Russian-influenced government in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Perhaps more important even than this was the fact that Britain had obligations to King George II of Greece. The King had decided to continue the war at Britain's side after the Germans had decided to support Italy, though the prospects were dark, and many conservative Greeks would have preferred surrender. The British government in general, and Mr. Churchill in particular, felt bound to see that the king returned to Greece.

What the Greeks should then decide was their affair, but Britain must not let down a gallant Allied monarch. But the stream of refugees and information from Greece to the Middle East showed more and more clearly that opinion in Greece was strongly for a republic. This opinion also predominated in the Greek community in Egypt and the Levant, from which the Greek army in the Middle East was largely recruited.

The Premier of the Greek government in exile, Tsouderos, was a man of unstable views, swinging from left centre to right centre, from monarchy to republic. In February 1942 the king formally abolished the dictatorship introduced in 1936. But this did not placate opinion at home. In March a group of prominent politicians in Athens signed a manifesto urging that the king should not return until a plebiscite had been held. Meanwhile political factions grew in the army. In the spring of 1943 there was a mutiny, led by a republican league of officers. It was appeased by the appointment of republican officers to the positions of command. But meanwhile E.A.M. propaganda spread in the ranks, using the republican officers as an unconscious screen. In August 1943 a delegation of representatives of E.A.M., E.D.E.S. and E.K.K.A. was brought to Cairo. They suggested postponement of the king's return until after a plebiscite, but neither he nor the British government would consent to this. In December Tsouderos sent a secret emissary to selected persons in Athens, suggesting a temporary Regency under the Archbishop of Athens, Damaskinos. When the expected favourable replies were received, he suggested it to the king. The king had already in November made a public statement to Tsouderos that he would 'examine anew the question' of his return, but that was as far as he would go. Tsouderos's manoeuvre naturally undermined confidence between king and premier.

Meanwhile the situation in Greece had grown worse. When the Italian army surrendered in September 1943, some of the Italian units in Greece decided to go over to the guerrillas. It was E.L.A.S. which got their arms. Being now very much stronger, E.L.A.S. was less dependent on British supplies of arms, and therefore less bound to please the British. Now was the time to deal with its rivals. In October E.L.A.S. attacked Zervas. No more British supplies of arms were sent to E.L.A.S., though British missions remained, and food and clothing were still dropped to E.L.A.S. units. British supplies to Zervas were increased. It was only this which saved his forces from annihila-

tion. The civil war came to an end in February 1944, when British pressure persuaded E.L.A.S. to sign the Plaka agreement, delimiting the respective territorial zones of E.L.A.S. and E.D.E.S.<sup>1</sup> This only stopped the shooting. The two sides remained implacably opposed.

The opposition to E.L.A.S. was also reinforced from a new source. The Germans could not spare troops to replace the Italian divisions. They therefore recruited 'security battalions' of Greeks to fight E.L.A.S. The quisling government of Rallis (Premier since April 1943) concentrated its efforts on anti-communist propaganda. It was fortunate in recruiting General Gonatas, the veteran republican and Plastiras's colleague of 1922. Gonatas was a leading member of E.D.E.S. The civilian E.D.E.S. organisation now supported the security battalions, and so at least indirectly 'collaborated' with the Germans. Zervas therefore formally broke with it, and gave his force a new name. In fact, though Zervas loyally obeyed British instructions, he now regarded the communists as his main enemies, as they him. Whether Zervas came to arrangements with the Germans is uncertain. The communists of course asserted it. If he himself did not, it is quite possible that some of his underlings did. Certainly the dividing line between security battalions and nationalist bands (Zervas, Tsaous or others) became very blurred.<sup>2</sup>

During 1944 a communist state grew up within Greece. E.A.M. had always been a communist organisation, but now the camouflage which had concealed it wore thin. The communist organisation was similar to that in Yugoslavia, but less efficient. Propaganda was controlled by the party. Villages had their committees to organise supplies for the bands and essential work outside the battle area. Food and recruits were requisitioned from the peasantry. Opposition was unhesitatingly, and often very cruelly, suppressed. A great part of the peasantry and most of the clergy were antagonised. The security battalions received a good deal of genuine popular support as a result of communist atrocities. On the other hand it is certain that E.L.A.S. had much willing and enthusiastic support from all classes. Young peasants joined it from a patriotic desire to fight the enemy and also because they wished for a new deal after the war, for the help of the state against poverty, redress from bureaucratic injustice, and a chance

<sup>1</sup> The texts of the National Bands Agreement and the Plaka agreement are contained in Woodhouse, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the evidence on Zervas 'collaboration', see Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-81.

of education, which the old regime, in practice if not in theory, had so largely denied them. People were sick of the old party strife between republicans and royalists, which had lost its meaning and only served to retard reforms. The communist argument, that the old party struggle was a struggle between rival bourgeois cliques for the opportunity to exploit the people, contained much truth, and won much support. It is significant that many students and young teachers were among the second-rank E.L.A.S. leaders.

The political crisis advanced a stage further in the spring of 1944. In March the king went from Cairo to London to plead his case. In the Middle East a serious mutiny took place. Shortly before this E.L.A.S. had proclaimed a provisional government, or Committee of Liberation (P.E.E.A.) 'in the mountains of Greece'. Its first president was a distinguished republican officer, decorated with the British D.S.O. in the First World War, Colonel Euripides Bakirdzis. A month later he was replaced by a more political figure, a socialist professor of Athens University, Svolos. The mutinous Greek forces demanded the postponement of the king's return to Greece pending a plebiscite, a purge of 'fascist officers' in their ranks, and recognition of P.E.E.A. as the provincial government. The action was all the more awkward as it occurred on the eve of the departure of the first Greek brigade to Italy to fight the enemy. British troops had to blockade the Greek units. They surrendered at the end of April without bloodshed. A new government had been formed under Sophocles Venizelos, son of the great statesman. But his name proved insufficient to restore unity, and it became perfectly clear that republican officers were no longer able to control the troops, who had been well indoctrinated with E.A.M. propaganda. Venizelos was succeeded as Premier by Papandreou, a politician of the left centre, who called himself a social democrat. He had made a good impression on British officers in Greece, and had been brought out to lead a cabinet of unity.

It was now decided to summon a congress on Allied territory to try to thrash out political problems. It met in the Lebanon mountains in May. There were delegates from E.A.M. and from the Athens political parties and the exiles. A 'Lebanon charter' was proclaimed, which included unification of all guerrilla forces, an end to 'terrorism', guarantees of political liberty, and punishment of traitors and 'exploiters of the people's misery'. The E.A.M. delegation returned to Greece, but E.A.M. for some

weeks would not ratify the agreement. Meanwhile intrigues developed between the politicians of the Liberal Party and the Papandreou group. A formal denunciation on 7 September by Papandreou of the security battalions partly placated E.A.M. In September E.A.M. representatives eventually joined the government. According to a later statement by Professor Svolos, this was a result of advice given them by the Soviet Minister in Cairo.<sup>1</sup> There had been a Soviet military mission with E.L.A.S. since August 1944. It had arrived from Yugoslavia without any previous announcement to the Allied governments. It did not seem to play much part in the affairs of E.A.M.

The collapse of the German positions in the Balkans, resulting from Rumania's defection, made the evacuation of Greece a matter of days. The Greek government moved to Italy. An agreement was signed in Caserta by Sarafis and Zervas. Both guerrilla groups recognised the authority of the Greek government, and the Greek government placed all Greek forces under the command of the British General Scobie. Apart from the forces inside Greece, there were at this time two Greek regular armed units, the 'Rimini Brigade' and the 'Sacred Squadron'. Both consisted of personnel screened after the mutiny, and so thoroughly loyal to the government. It is only a mild exaggeration to describe them as a private army of the Greek right. They had fought well in Italy. In October British troops landed in Greece. The Germans retired, E.L.A.S. doing little to hamper their withdrawal. British troops were wildly acclaimed in Athens. The Greek government arrived on 18 October. The greater part of Greece was held by E.L.A.S., which was also very strong in the capital. Relations between British and E.L.A.S. forces were correct, and at the lower levels cordial. But no controversial issue had been solved.

#### ALBANIA

Albania between the wars differed from the general social and political pattern of Eastern Europe sketched in the first two chapters. If the other Balkan countries were in many respects backward, Albania had hardly changed since the fifteenth century. There were important differences between the north and south. The northerners (Ghegs) spoke a somewhat different dialect from the southerners (Tosks). More important was the difference of social and political organisation. The Ghegs formed a tribal society, comparable to that of the Scottish clansmen before

<sup>1</sup> MacNeill, *op. cit.*

the 'Forty-five. Most were Moslem, but one important tribe, the Miridites, led by the Markagjoni family, were Catholics. The land of the tribes was mountainous, poor and relatively over-populated. The Tosks were led by big landowners, or beys. The land was more fertile in their territory, especially the coastal plain with its substantial towns Tirana, Durazzo and Valona. The system of land tenure was a Moslem type of feudalism. The majority of the Tosk population owned little or no land. Industry was very backward, but such as it was, it was in the Tosk region. An Italian company had begun to exploit oil wells near the coast. There was some regular labour in the docks of Durazzo and Valona, and in small enterprises in Tirana and Korcha (Koritsa) on the Greek frontier. The Tosks too were mostly Moslems, but there was an Orthodox element, to some extent subject to Greek influence. There was a small Greek minority in south Albania and an Albanian minority scattered over Greece. The largest Albanian minority outside Albania was in Yugoslavia, in the Kosovo area of the former Novi Bazar province or 'Sandjak'.

Albania had no political parties. Politics was a matter for the chieftains and the beys. Ahmed Bey Zogu, who became King Zog in 1927, was a member of a powerful family from the Mati region in central Albania. He had seized power in 1924 by overthrowing the Orthodox Bishop Fan Noli. The Bishop had tried to carry out social reforms, especially a redistribution of land, and so united the beys against himself. His secretary, Mallesheva, was a communist. In the thirties there was a group of Albanian communist students in France. Other young Albanians learned communist sympathies at Belgrade University. A few visited Moscow. There were also some Albanians among the foreign volunteers for the Spanish Republic. A schoolmaster in Korcha named Enver Hoxha was the leading Albanian communist. But there was not yet an organised Communist Party.

When the Italians occupied Albania, they made Premier a bey named Shevket Vrlaci, who had once been a supporter of Zog. In the Italo-Greek war some Albanian forces fought under Italian command. The victorious Axis annexed to Albania the whole Kosovo area and the western fringe of Macedonia. In both areas the population was mostly Albanian. But these gains did not really popularise the Italians. The Albanian mountaineers resented any sort of central authority, and if it was foreign the resentment was greater. Moreover a generation of relative independence had shown them that the main enemy of their

country was Italy. Thus the Albanians were in the right mood for resistance: they only needed an organiser.

This was provided by the small group of communist intellectuals, educated in France, Italy, Yugoslavia or Russia, and having contact with the more powerful communist organisations of Yugoslavia and Greece. In accordance with the overall Comintern directive to form Popular Fronts, the communists summoned a meeting of Albanian patriots at Peza in September 1942. At this meeting was founded the National Liberation Movement (L.N.C.). It had the usual programme of armed resistance to the invaders and political and social democracy after victory. Among its leaders were Baba Mustafa Faja, the head of a monastery of the Moslem sect of the Bektashi; Myslim Peza, a guerrilla leader who had been an outlaw already for ten years; and Abbas Kupa, a landowner from near Kruja and supporter of Zog, who had offered almost the only resistance to the Italian landing in 1939. The most important communist leaders were Enver Hoxha, a former schoolmaster from the southern town of Korça, Malesheva, Gjinishi and Nako Spiro. The last two had organised communist groups in Tirana and Durazzo respectively. Gjinishi had lived for some time in Belgrade, where he had been in touch with British organisations.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the Peza meeting and foundation of L.N.C., the conservative Albanian opposition to the Italians organised itself in a National Front (Balli Kombetar). This was led by prominent persons who before the Italian invasion had opposed King Zog. The movement was republican and mildly liberal. It was also strongly nationalist, and wished to keep for Albania the provinces annexed to it by the Axis in 1941.

As news of the Albanian resistance trickled through to Allied territory, the British military authorities in the Middle East began to take an interest. The official attitude of the British government to Albanian independence had been stated by Mr. Eden. But as Yugoslavia and Greece, Britain's allies, had lost territory to Albania, and some of their leaders hoped to annex Albanian territory even beyond the frontiers of April 1941, Albania's situation after ultimate Allied victory remained obscure. The British Command therefore decided to establish contact with

<sup>1</sup> See Julian Amery, *Sons of the Eagle*. This gives a clear and revealing picture of the northern tribes and nationalist politicians. It well conveys both the atmosphere of Balkan guerrilla and the special Albanian social and cultural scene. There is no comparable book on the Albanian partisans. A novel, *Eight Hours from England*, by Anthony Quayle, based on personal experience, is of interest.

Albanian resisters and help them to make themselves a nuisance to the Axis, but to avoid political commitments. Two British officers, Major Maclean and Captain Smiley, were parachuted to northern Greece, and thence made their way into Albania. They first met supporters of the Balli Kombetar, and then reached L.N.C. territory. They attended a L.N.C. conference at Labinot near Elbasan in July 1943. By this time communist control of L.N.C. was already very strong. There were also close links with the Yugoslav partisans. L.N.C. were becoming more preoccupied with the struggle against their internal Balli rivals than with the fight against the Italians, who were obviously losing the war. The British mission was concerned to attack the enemy, and for this purpose did not mind whether Balli or L.N.C. forces did the fighting. But Hoxha and his friends viewed with suspicion any British help to Balli forces, believing that this was directed not against the Italians but against themselves. The British mission wished to unite Balli and L.N.C. in common resistance to the enemy. This also commended itself to Abbas Kupa, still a member of the L.N.C. central committee. At Kupa's suggestion a conference of delegates from both movements met at Mukai near Tirana in July 1943. The news of the overthrow of Mussolini roused them all to a patriotic enthusiasm in which mutual suspicions were for a time swept away. They agreed to fight together against the Italians and to form a directing committee with an equal number of members from each side.

The collapse of Italy brought a national revolt. Recruits poured in to the guerrilla forces. A large part of the country, including such lesser towns as Korça, Elbasan and Berat, was liberated. Two Italian divisions went over to the guerrillas, who took their arms. Only the ports and Tirana and Scutari were still in enemy hands. At this point the Germans intervened. They could not leave the Adriatic coast open to an Allied landing: they must therefore take over the occupation of Albania. At the end of September German troops entered the country by air and from Macedonia. Soon the guerrillas were driven out of the towns and back into the hills.

Unable to spare many troops, the Germans decided to pacify Albania by political conciliation. Here they had certain advantages. The German Reich was the successor of Austria, which had in the past befriended Albania. The people had no unpleasant memories of the Germans. The Germans need not use the puppets on whom the Italians had relied, nor the creatures of ex-King Zog.

They made their appeal to the type of Albanian nationalist and republican represented in the Balli Kombetar. They set up a Regency Council of three—Mehdi Frasheri (brother of the Balli leader Midhat Frasheri), Lef Nosi and Anton Harapi, who formed a government of men who had not collaborated with the Italians. The government repealed the Italian fascist constitution, gave an amnesty to all who had fought the Italians, introduced a measure of civil liberties, and proclaimed Albania neutral. The presence of German troops was compared with the presence of British troops in neutral Egypt. The Germans did not interfere in internal politics in the area controlled by the government—which amounted to the coastal plain and a few towns. In the mountains chieftains or guerrillas were supreme.

The new government attracted the support of the Balli, and was acceptable to many of the chieftains. L.N.C. now with some justification accused the Balli Kombetar of collaboration with the invaders, refused to ratify the Mukai agreement, and concentrated on destroying its main rival for post-war power. In October Enver Hoxha ordered his forces everywhere to attack the Balli. This suited the Germans well enough, as war between Albanians would reduce the pressure on their own men. It brought a breach between L.N.C. and Abbas Kupa. In December 1943 Kupa held a congress of supporters in Herri, north of Tirana, and founded a third movement, the Legality Movement. It proclaimed its loyalty to ex-King Zog and its determination to continue the struggle against the Germans. Kupa offered to collaborate with L.N.C., but they replied by calling him a traitor and expelling him from their own ranks.

During the winter, the number of guerrillas fell. The enlarged British mission, under Brigadier Davies, was ambushed in January 1944 by Albanian quislings and most of its members were captured. Kupa dissolved his forces and remained at large with only a small group. The L.N.C. forces were mostly concentrated in the south. This had always been their most promising region, as wide social differences and the penetration of some European political ideas made the people accessible to their propaganda. In the north, personal loyalty to the chieftain remained the main force.

In the spring L.N.C. renewed its efforts, and fought against Germans as well as rival Albanians. In May there was a battle against a mixed German-Balli force numbering some 2,000. At this time it was estimated that L.N.C. had some 13,000 troops in regular units and several thousand more in scattered groups.

L.N.C. forces were becoming something like an army, on the model of the Yugoslav partisans. They now took the title National Liberation Army, adopted by Tito's partisans more than a year earlier. In May they also set up an Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation—modelled on the Yugoslav A.V.N.O.J.—and a committee which formed a provisional government. Enver Hoxha became the head of this government. Like the Yugoslavs at Jajce in November 1943,<sup>1</sup> the Albanian Council in their May meeting, held at Permet, denounced the exiled king and forbade him to return until the people had freely decided whether it wanted a monarchy or a republic. Zog was denounced as having been a dictator and a helper of fascist Italy. It was quite clear which way Enver Hoxha intended 'the people' to decide.

Meanwhile the Germans tried to get what they could out of Albania. By a commercial treaty of December 1943 the Albanian government agreed to make a payment towards the cost of German occupation troops. The Albanian gold reserve was moved from Rome to Berlin. Albania was to provide fixed monthly amounts of chrome ore and oil for export to Germany. An Albanian army was formed, under General Prenk Previsi, to assist the German forces. There was also a gendarmerie under the Minister of the Interior Xafer Deva. This man was a native of Kosovo, the area annexed from Yugoslavia. The Germans encouraged the formation in this area of an association of local chieftains called the Prizren League, of which Deva was president. They recruited from the Kosovo Albanians four battalions, which were placed under the command of a German officer. Later they were expanded into a special S.S. division, named after Skanderberg, Albania's national hero in the fifteenth century. S.S. Skadnerberg division was used in operations both against L.N.C. and against forces of Tito in Montenegro. Not all Kosovo Albanians supported the Germans. A 'Kosmet' brigade was also formed within the army of Tito. L.N.C. and Tito's army had been in contact since 1942. Tito's representative in Macedonia, Svetozar Vukmanović, known as 'Tempo', was responsible for liaison with the communist-led resistance movements of Albania, Greece and Bulgaria. The German forces in Albania had to be increased owing to the growing pressure from L.N.C. In June 1944 the First Mountain Division, a first-class German unit, was brought from Greece into Albania.

Hitherto L.N.C. had made little impression among the northern Ghegs. The north was dominated by five groups of chieftains. The

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 161.

most powerful was led by Abbas Kupa, and based on the Mati province around Tirana. The other chiefs were Markagjoni, leader of the Mirdites in the north-west; the Kryeziu brothers, from Djakovo in the north-east, towards Kosovo; Muharrem Bairaktar, from the Macedonian frontier; and Fiqri Dine, from Dibra, adjoining Muharrem in the south. Of these Kupa and Kryeziu were definitely pro-Allied, Markagjoni had supported the Italians and was now collaborating with the Germans, while the other two were uncertain. In April 1944 a British mission was sent to Kupa to persuade him to fight the Germans, to win over as many as possible of the Gheg chiefs, and to try and reconcile them with L.N.C.<sup>1</sup> But the mission had to compete with German diplomacy. In June the first German-sponsored government led by Rexhep Mitrovica resigned. Neubacher, Hitler's political expert for Balkan problems, came to Tirana. He persuaded Fiqri Dine to form the next government. Kupa refused Fiqri Dine's request to join the government. But at the end of June L.N.C. launched an attack against Kupa's territory. To defend himself, Kupa fought together with Fiqri Dine's troops. The first L.N.C. attack was repelled, but the second, in August, was successful. Kupa's men were driven out of most of Mati province.

At the end of August it became clear that the Germans would soon have to evacuate the whole Balkan peninsula. On 29 August Fiqri Dine resigned. He and the 'commander-in-chief' Prenk Prevesi joined Kupa and promised to attack the Germans. But their forces melted away. In Tirana the Germans installed as Premier a certain Ibrahim Biçaku, whose only qualification was that he played ping-pong with the German minister.<sup>2</sup> Dibra was overrun by Tito and L.N.C. Kupa's plans for a last decisive attack on the Germans came to nothing. L.N.C. forces advanced from the south. The only Gheg chief who was able to put up a real fight against the Germans was Gani Bey Kryeziu. He fought a series of brave guerrilla actions in the Djakovo area from July to September. In mid-September, however, L.N.C. forces reached his area. They arrested the British officer attached to his troops, and cruelly murdered his political adviser, an ex-communist named Fundo. Gani Bey's brother Said was lured to L.N.C. headquarters and taken prisoner, but later succeeded in escaping. Later Gani Bey himself was arrested by the Yugoslavs, and condemned by one of

<sup>1</sup> It consisted of Lt.-Col. Maclean and Major Smiley (who had made the first contacts with Albanian guerrilla forces in 1943) and Capt. Julian Amery. Its story is told in Amery, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Amery, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

Tito's 'people's courts' to five years' imprisonment as a 'reactionary'.

The Germans left Albania in October. Their rearguards were engaged by L.N.C. troops and strafed by Allied aircraft and suffered casualties. But their best troops, including the First Mountain Division, got away. L.N.C. waited till they were gone, and then walked into Valona in October, and Tirana, Durazzo and Scutari in November. Abbas Kupa and some other Gheg leaders escaped across the Adriatic. Enver Hoxha and his communists controlled the country.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The main resistance effort in Czechoslovakia was performed by the Slovaks in 1944. The north and centre of Slovakia, being mountainous, sparsely populated and poor in communications, provided good terrain. As the Red Army approached the Slovak frontiers, enthusiasm for the 'Slav brothers' grew. It was fostered by the underground communists and by Russian parachutists. Partisan bands began to appear. Some were led by Red Army officers, and one was stiffened by a number of escaped French prisoners-of-war, who specially distinguished themselves. In the cities the communist organisation became more active in propaganda and in recruitment of partisans.

The communists were not the only force in Slovakia opposed to the Axis. An important minority of the Slovak middle class and peasantry had before 1938 supported the Agrarian Party. The Slovak agrarians had wished to preserve the Czechoslovak republic, though with greater autonomy for Slovakia within it. When their rivals, the fascist People's Party, obtained power with Hitler's help, and the 'independent state' of Mgr. Tiso was set up, they did not change their view. They had most support among the Protestant minority in central Slovakia, especially in Turiec county, the birthplace of nineteenth-century Slovak nationalism. Some of their leaders communicated from time to time by secret channels with the Czechoslovak government in exile. As the Germans retreated on all fronts, and increased their demands from Slovakia, even the leaders of the Slovak fascist regime grew restive. Mach, the Minister of the Interior and once the most fanatical of the Slovak fascists, deliberately overlooked the activities of the underground communists and the middle-class pro-Czech politicians. The commander-in-chief of the Slovak army, General Čatloš, toyed with the idea of taking his forces over to the Russians.

Three colonels—Golian, Vesel and Ferenčík—planned a rising of the army against the Germans.

The end of August was a critical moment for the Germans. Rumania had deserted them, Bulgaria was preparing to do the same, Horthy had dismissed the pro-German Premier Sztojay. With the Red Army advancing over the Carpathians, it was essential to make sure of Slovakia. On 29 August German troops marched in. The Slovak resistance was not ready. A large part of the Slovak forces accepted German orders. Tiso himself ordered his people to help the Germans. The valley of the Vah was soon in German hands. In the centre, however, a considerable territory was established as Free Slovakia.

During the winter of 1943-4, whether at the Tehran conference or after, it seems to have been decided that the Red Army should have the responsibility for liberating Czechoslovakia. The Western Powers had other commitments. A few aircraft flew from Italy to a Slovak airfield, and British and American missions were sent to keep the Allied Command informed of events. But material help from the West was negligible.

The Russians on the other hand had the opportunity and the obligation to help. Their efforts were disappointing. Attempts had been made in mid-August to co-ordinate the action of the Slovak forces with that of the Red Army, through the Czechoslovak government. The Russians had been evasive. When the rising had begun, they sent the airborne brigade of Colonel Přikryl, part of the Czechoslovak forces in the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Přikryl's men fought bravely, but they were too few. The Soviet attitude to the Slovak rising was less brutally cynical than to the Warsaw rising which was going on at the same time, but in practice it amounted to the same thing. The Slovak patriots, like those of Warsaw, were left to their fate.

Free Slovakia had at first one advantage, that its frontier in the south was safe. The Hungarians, at this time engaged in preparing their surrender, did not act against Slovakia, and no German troops passed through Hungarian territory to attack. During October, however, the Germans made a serious attack on Free Slovak territory, and after the Szálasi *coup d'état* of 15 October they could use Hungarian territory as well. On 27 October Banská Bystrica, the 'capital' of Free Slovakia, was taken. After this only guerrilla resistance was possible. The regular army units which had joined the rising were demoralised and melted away. The advancing Germans wreaked savage reprisals, massacring civilians

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 163.

and burning villages. The Slovak partisans and the remnant of Prikryl's forces took to the mountains. During the winter they suffered terrible privations, but some survived until the Red Army advanced in March. Among those who perished were the officers and men of the British and American liaison missions, led by Major Sehmer and Lieutenant Green. They were captured by the Germans in uniform, but shot, contrary to the rules of war. The Germans also captured and executed both Golian and General Viest, whom the exiled government had sent to command the rising.

During the two months of freedom, Banská Bystrica had been the scene of much political activity. A Slovak National Council had been set up, with a Board of Commissioners—or temporary regional ministers. Power was shared between two political parties—communists and democrats. The communists had persuaded the Slovak social democrats to fuse with them. There had of course been no opportunity to consult the members of the Social Democrat Party, but a few leaders had taken the decision on their own responsibility. The democrats were based on a nucleus of Protestants from central Slovakia who had formerly supported the Agrarian Party. Their leader was Jan Ursiny, a banker from the small town of Turčiansky Svätý Martin. Another prominent figure was Dr. Šrobar, one of the founders of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and a champion of greater centralism than Ursiny. Free Slovakia did not last long enough for political friction to develop far. Elements of the familiar Mihailović-Tito pattern were there, in the different views on resistance held by the regular forces under Golian and the partisans led by the communists. But the German menace kept the political front united.

Democrats and communists appointed a joint delegation which flew to London to explain to President Beneš and his government the views of the Slovak patriots. The delegates stated their desire that the Czechoslovak republic should be restored, but insisted that it must be recognised as the home of two separate Slav nations, Czechs and Slovaks. The old theory of Czech nationalists, supported by a few Slovaks, of a composite Czechoslovak nation, must be abandoned. Slovakia must have a wide autonomy within the new republic. These views were unwelcome to President Beneš, who had always been one of the champions of the 'Czechoslovak' theory. But he was forced to admit that the Slovak sense of nationhood was a fact. The conversations between

delegates and government were of value, but much still remained to be cleared up. The Slovak National Council and its Board of Commissioners were recognised as representing Slovak opinion.

In the Czech Protectorate conditions did not favour armed resistance. There was an underground organisation, in fairly regular contact with the exiled government. Information was passed to the Allies which may have been of value. It is also possible that passive resistance and 'go-slow' tactics by the Czech workers harmed the enemy. This cannot be proved. The industrial workers were relatively privileged under the Nazi regime. Many seem to have carried on their jobs without bothering about politics, waiting for the Great Powers to liberate their country for them. The communists were against resistance until Russia was attacked. Then they were for sabotage of the German war effort. But not very much sabotage seems to have been done. The peasants too, while remaining Czech patriots at heart, submitted to the occupation, and materially did quite well out of it. Those who resisted most, and suffered most, were the intellectuals and the civil servants and army officers of the old republic. Many were arrested, tortured, sent to concentration camps or executed. The 38,000 executions of Czechs during the six years of Nazi rule came mostly from the middle class. If it seems that the Czech resistance effort was less heroic than that of Poles or South Slavs, and even that many Czechs prospered in the land furthest removed from all the fronts, it must not be thought that life was easy for them. Physical and mental wounds of the Czech people will take a long time yet to heal.

The most sensational act of resistance was the assassination of Heydrich in May 1942. Carried out by parachutists sent from England, it was a brilliant stroke, but it cost the Czech people dear in reprisals. In the summer of 1944 partisan bands began to appear in the Moravian hills. They were mostly organised by communists. Among them were Red Army parachutists and even some escaped British prisoners-of-war. Their struggle was hard and brave, but the total effect of their actions was small. The climax was the rising in Prague in May 1945.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### GREAT AND SMALL ALLIES

**D**EVELOPMENTS in the occupied countries were affected by the activities of the governments in exile, which from their place of refuge on Allied territory attempted to influence events at home and also to represent their peoples with the governments of the major Allied Powers. In the first period of the war their problems were only with the British government. The entry of the U.S.S.R. and the United States into the war complicated every issue. Especially after the turn of the tide at Stalingrad and in North Africa, disputes between the three great Allies concerning the politics of the small Allies became ever more bitter and more important. We shall here consider the relations of the Allied governments to Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The problems of Greece were, as long as the war lasted, less important in inter-Allied relations, and the relations of the Greek exiled government with the movements at home have already been mentioned in the section on Greek resistance.

#### POLAND

The German invasion of Russia made necessary a Polish-Soviet reconciliation. The British government was keen to bring its old and new allies together. In an agreement of 30 July 1941, signed in London by Sikorski and the Soviet ambassador Maisky, the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of 1939 was formally repudiated, but nothing was said of where the frontier between Poland and Russia should be. The Poles officially interpreted the agreement as recognition by the U.S.S.R. of the pre-1939 line, but the Soviet government did not commit itself. This uncertainty did not satisfy the Polish Foreign Minister, Count Zaleski, who resigned in protest. In accordance with the agreement, the Soviet President Kalinin announced an 'amnesty' to all Poles deprived of their freedom on Soviet territory as prisoners-of-war or civilian internees. On 14 August a Polish-Soviet military agreement was signed. A Polish army was to be formed from the released Polish prisoners. It was to form an integral part of the armed forces of

the sovereign republic of Poland, and was to be commanded by General Władysław Anders. It was to be under the operational command of the Red Army, and its members were to receive pay and rations as in the Red Army. Part of the equipment supplied by the Western Powers to the Soviet Union was to be given to the Polish forces. During the autumn the liberated Poles began to assemble at Buzuluk, not far from the temporary capital of Kuibyshev on the Volga.<sup>1</sup>

The liberated Poles had been so badly treated in the preceding two years that almost all had a bitter hatred of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> This was true of all from General Anders down to the private soldiers. Accommodation in the Buzuluk centre was inadequate, and there were the usual endless difficulties with the Soviet administrative authorities. The fact that the Soviet civilian population suffered equal, or perhaps even greater, hardships did not make the Poles any less discontented. But the chief cause of Polish hostility was that many of the Poles known to have been captured in 1939 did not appear at the centre. In particular, from his own personal knowledge and the detailed information of his men, Anders had prepared a list of Polish officers who had been captured in 1939 and who now appeared untraceable.

In December 1941 General Sikorski visited Moscow, and had conversations with Stalin at which Anders was present. The missing officers were mentioned, but Stalin and Molotov could give no explanation. During these talks the Polish-Soviet frontier issue arose indirectly when the Soviet leaders objected to the recruitment into the Polish forces of persons of non-Polish origin (Galician Ukrainians, White Russians or Jews) from the 1939 Polish territories on the grounds that these were Soviet citizens. Sikorski suggested sending Polish civilians, and such soldiers as the Soviet authorities might find it difficult to equip, to Persia, where the Western Allies would look after them. Stalin chose to interpret this as a desire of the Poles to run away from the Russian front and of the British to recruit further foreign cannon-fodder. In March 1942 the rations of the Polish forces were suddenly reduced. Anders was invited by Stalin to discuss this, and was told that supplies had been hampered by Japanese interference with

<sup>1</sup> For the conditions in which this army was formed, see Anders, *Army in Exile*, and Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory*. The author of the latter was Polish Ambassador in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> For a picture of this treatment see the composite work of testimony by Polish internees in the U.S.S.R. entitled *The Dark Side of the Moon*, with preface by Mme. Sikorska.

American vessels sailing to Vladivostok. Stalin now agreed that 44,000 Poles should be given full Red Army rations, and that the rest should be evacuated to Persia. In April and May Anders visited the Middle East and Britain, and persuaded Sikorski that it was desirable to evacuate the whole force. Anders naturally resisted pressure from the Soviet military command that his forces be sent in small units to the front, in which case they would have lost their national identity and merely served as additional cannon-fodder to be expended. Finally, on 7 July the Soviet government consented to the evacuation of the whole force.

The whole experience of the Anders army in Russia left a bitter taste on both sides. Soviet propaganda has since accused the Poles of running away at the time of the great German offensive in the south. The Poles accused the Russians of starving them of food and clothing. It is true that from the beginning the Poles distrusted and hated the Soviet authorities, but considering how they had been treated this is hardly surprising. On the other hand, to the Soviet leaders, and their sympathisers in the west, it is sufficient to dub someone 'anti-Soviet' to damn them utterly. When Anders left Russia, there was still no news of the missing officers. Another disturbing event was the disappearance of two Polish Jewish socialist leaders, Ehrlich and Alter, arrested on unknown grounds after they had been released from prison for some months.

The Anders army was trained in the Middle East, and played a heroic part in the later campaigns in Italy, thereby equalling the high reputation already won by the Poles in the R.A.F. in Britain, the soldiers of the first emigration of 1939-40. Meanwhile relations between the Polish and Soviet governments were cold. In December 1942 Litvinov, now Soviet Ambassador in Washington, informed Mr. Green of the American Federation of Labour that Ehrlich and Alter had been shot for 'work among the Red Army and Soviet civil population on behalf of Hitler'. To anyone who knew the two men's records this was incredible. In January 1943 it was announced that all Polish deportees remaining on Soviet territory would be treated as Soviet citizens. On 4 February an appeal was published in Kuibyshev to Poles still in the Soviet Union to join a Polish army to be formed on Soviet soil. This army was nominally led by Colonel Berling, who had earlier served under Anders. By 1944 it had three divisions. Most of its officers were either Russians or Soviet citizens of Polish origin. The men were mostly former Polish prisoners.

In April the German Command announced that it had dis-

covered a mass grave of Polish officers in the forest of Katyn, near Smolensk, who had been massacred by the Russians in the summer of 1940. The Polish government rashly asked the International Red Cross to investigate on its behalf, though of course such investigation would have had to be conducted with the permission of the German Command. The Soviet government accused the Germans of the massacre, and broke off diplomatic relations with the Polish government, accusing it of helping Goebbels' propaganda. There is no doubt that the Katyn affair was a success for German propaganda. Yet it is hardly fair to blame the Polish government for the breach. The particulars of the dead officers and the date of their death fitted with those of one of the three camps in which the missing Polish officers had been imprisoned. Of the inmates of the other two camps nothing has ever been, or probably ever will be, heard. No government can be expected to show indifference to the fate of thousands of its officers, least of all when it needs every trained man to fight for his country.<sup>1</sup>

For the following months British and American diplomacy made great but unsuccessful efforts to reconcile their two allies. They were faced with two great difficulties. The first was the territorial dispute between Poland and Russia, the second the support which Moscow now began to give to a group of Polish communists which it was preparing to take over the government of liberated Poland.

The Polish-Soviet frontier of 1921 had not corresponded to the ethnical boundary of Poland in the east. It is true that before 1772, the date of the first partition of historical Poland, Polish territory had stretched far further east than the 1921 line. Polish nationalists in 1921 had maintained that they were being extremely generous to Russia in renouncing the 1772 frontier. But the area in which Poles were a majority of the population stopped far to the west of the 1921 line, approximately at the so-called 'Curzon line' proposed in 1919 by the British Foreign Secretary as a basis of discussions at that time. East of the Curzon line, however, were two great cities whose population and historical traditions were without doubt Polish—Lwów and Wilno. Polish public opinion was more or less unanimous on the need to restore them to Poland. The provinces around Lwów had a mainly Ukrainian population, but were of great economic importance to

<sup>1</sup> The accounts of General Anders and of Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination*, pp. 27-42, present a powerful case against the Soviet government, which the latter has done little to dispel.

Poland owing to their oilfields. There was also a Polish population amounting to nearly five millions in the whole territory between the Curzon line and the 1921 frontier. It might have been hoped that a compromise could be reached, giving Russia the greater part of the non-Polish territory but leaving Wilno, Lwów and the oil region to Poland, and granting Poland compensation in the west at Germany's expense. This was the solution for which Britain and America strove. But though both the Soviet and Polish governments were eager that German territory be given to Poland, they were uncompromising on their mutual frontier. The Polish government insisted that the 1921 frontier be restored, and the Polish people be consulted by democratic means before any modification was made. The Soviet government demanded the Curzon line, which was appreciably more favourable to Poland than the Ribbentrop-Molotov line and of course had not such unpleasant associations, yet was unacceptable to public opinion either in exile or in Poland. Regarding opinion in Poland the exiled government was well informed, owing to its excellent connections by wireless and by courier with the underground movement.

The Polish problem seems to have been discussed at the Tehran conference of December 1943. On their return the British Premier and Foreign Secretary advised the Polish government to accept the Curzon line, but hoped still to be able to obtain Lwów and Wilno for Poland. General Sikorski had been killed in an air accident in June 1943. The Polish Premier was now Mikołajczyk, one of the leaders before 1939 of the People's Party, and one of the organisers of the famous peasant strike of 1937, a good democrat and patriot who had long wished for friendly relations between Poland and Russia. Mikołajczyk could not bring himself to accept the British advice. He placed his faith in American support. President Roosevelt did not commit himself, and reminded the Polish Premier that the United States was traditionally averse to precise territorial commitments. But his public and private cordiality, and his admiration and sympathy for Poland, caused Mikołajczyk to believe that Roosevelt would support him. He and his cabinet therefore remained unyielding.<sup>1</sup>

In the winter the Red Army passed the 1921 frontier. On 5 January 1944 the Polish government called on the Home Army to collaborate with the Red Army, and made a new proposal for the restoration of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The

<sup>1</sup> Ciechanowski, *op. cit.*, Mikołajczyk, *op. cit.*

Soviet government rejected the proposal, and pointed out that the Red Army was not yet on Polish soil, 'as the Soviet constitution had established a Soviet-Polish frontier corresponding with the desires of the population of western Ukraine and western White Russia'. The Soviet government continued to ignore the Polish government and dealt with the Union of Polish Patriots, formed already the preceding year by the Polish communist woman Wanda Wasilewska, the wife of a minister in the government of the Ukrainian Soviet republic (Korneichuk), and with the commanders of Berling's army. In January 1944 it was announced that representatives of K.R.N., the 'true Polish resistance', Osóbka-Morawski and Bierut, had reached Moscow.<sup>1</sup> In July 1944 the Red Army crossed the Bug, and so, in the official Soviet view, entered Poland. On 21 July a Polish Committee of National Liberation was set up, under Bierut and Osóbka-Morawski. A few days later it established itself in the liberated city of Lublin. The Red Army handed over to it the civil administration behind the front, while leaders of the Home Army, who in accordance with instructions from the Polish government in London revealed themselves to the Russians, were arrested and in some cases killed.

In June 1944 Mikołajczyk visited Roosevelt in the United States, but received only expressions of cordial friendship and recommendations to go to Moscow and come to terms with the Russians, who after all are 'five times as numerous as the Poles'. He arrived in Moscow at the end of July. A few days later the Warsaw rising began. Mikołajczyk's conversations with the Soviet leaders and with representatives of the 'Lublin Committee' achieved no results. The failure of the Red Army to help Warsaw increased the bitterness on all sides. In October Mikołajczyk set out on a second visit to Moscow, to coincide with that of Churchill and Eden. Churchill pressed the Polish Premier to accept the Curzon line, pointing out that this was the only hope of dissuading Stalin from installing the Lublin Committee as the government of Poland. The Lublinites would give him all he wanted, but if Mikołajczyk also respected Soviet wishes there might still be some chance of a representative government for liberated Poland. The new lands in the west would more than compensate for the loss in the east. The unfortunate Mikołajczyk, however, could not bring himself to accept this. He pointed out that the Polish people had a right to be consulted, and he knew that both his colleagues in London and the resistance leaders at

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 115.

home were opposed to the Curzon line. He received a heavy blow when Molotov revealed, in the presence of the American Ambassador Harriman—who did not deny him—that at Tehran Roosevelt had already approved the Curzon line.<sup>1</sup> All that Stalin would agree to was a seat in the new Polish cabinet for Mikołajczyk, but three-quarters of the cabinet posts to go to Lublin men. He refused to surrender Lwów and the oil-fields to Poland. On his return to London, Mikołajczyk recommended to his colleagues that they should accept the Curzon line on condition that Lwów be given to Poland, and expressed the hope that even despite Stalin's refusal this might yet be achieved, thanks to American support. But his colleagues refused to consider territorial changes, and Mikołajczyk resigned the premiership on 24 November.

Mikołajczyk's position had never been very strong. He and the other democratic politicians, from the Peasant Party and the Socialist Party, had been served by officials, diplomats and army officers whose political views had always been more conservative, many of whom in fact were former supporters of the Pilsudski regime. The most outstanding of these was General Sosnkowski, Chief of General Staff until September 1944, who was a special target of Soviet and pro-Soviet propaganda. This propaganda also pointed out that the exiled government had refused to abolish the 1935 Constitution, which was not democratic and which had been forced through the Polish parliament by a trick by Pilsudski's men in the pre-war dictatorial era.<sup>2</sup> Mikołajczyk's refusal to change this until the Polish people had been legally consulted was surely a political error, an example of excessive formalism. Mikołajczyk himself hated this constitution, from which his own party had suffered more than any. His reluctance to change it was presumably partly due to his dependence on former Pilsudskists.

Mikołajczyk's successor was the veteran socialist Arciszewski, who all his life had fought against Russia. He had been evacuated in the summer from Poland, where he had been one of the leaders of resistance. Under his leadership the exiled government moved to the right, and grew more anti-Soviet than ever. But it must be said in fairness that its attitude represented the feelings of the Poles not only in exile but at home. Soviet treatment of the Warsaw rising and of the Home Army revived all the bitter memories of 1795, 1830, 1863 and 1939. The staunchest Polish democrats despaired of co-operation as equals between Poles and Russians.

<sup>1</sup> Mikołajczyk, *op. cit.*, pp. 107–8.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 47.

It was now obvious that the Soviet government would place power in the hands of the Lublin Committee. On 31 December it declared itself the Provisional Government of Poland. In spite of two personal messages from Roosevelt to Stalin requesting him to postpone formal diplomatic recognition, the Soviet government recognised it on 5 January 1945.<sup>1</sup> The Yalta conference in February decided that a commission should be set up by the three Great Powers in Moscow to discuss with Polish leaders from Poland and from the emigration in west and east the formation of a representative government. For months the commission could not agree who should be invited. Poland was thus not represented at the San Francisco conference in April. The Soviet government on 21 April signed a formal treaty of alliance with the Lublin 'government'. Inter-allied friction reached a climax on 3 May, when Molotov announced the arrest of the sixteen Polish resistance leaders for 'diversionary activities' against the Red Army.<sup>2</sup> The deadlock was broken by the mission of Harry Hopkins to Moscow. The journey killed Hopkins, whose health had long been in danger. It led to agreement on a list of candidates for membership of the government. On 21 June the new government was formed. Mikołajczyk, who had for the third time made the humiliating pilgrimage to Moscow, became one of the vice-premiers. Britain and America gave recognition on 5 July. The Potsdam declaration in August promised that the Allies would help repatriation of Poles who wished to return, in the expectation that they would have 'personal and property rights on the same basis as all Polish citizens'. It also took note of the government's agreement to 'hold free and unfettered elections' with universal suffrage and secret ballot.

#### YUGOSLAVIA

When Yugoslavia was invaded, Britain had no other ally in the field except Greece. It was natural that Britain should feel a special sense of obligation to the nation which had so bravely defied Hitler, and, in Mr. Churchill's words, had 'found her soul'. It was also natural that the exiled government should go to London. The principle of loyalty between allies required that the British government should in all matters affecting Yugoslavia accept the advice of the Yugoslav government in exile. There seemed the more reason to trust the exiled government's judgment because

<sup>1</sup> Ciechanowski, op. cit. See also *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. 2, and the *State Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, vol. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See above p. 118.

it contained representatives of all the main pre-war political parties except the communists, and so had a good claim to be considered a genuine cabinet of national unity. This appearance proved, however, before long to be deceptive in two important respects.

In the first place, the Serbian and Croatian ministers were not in agreement. Dr. Krnjević, representing Maček's Croatian Peasant Party, was determined to obtain recognition from his colleagues of the terms of the 1939 Cvetković-Maček agreement. This the Serbian ministers had been reluctant to give while still in Belgrade, and they became still more evasive in exile. In the late summer of 1941 the first reports of the massacres of Serbs by Ustash reached them. It was natural that they should be horrified. Unfortunately some of them seem to have decided to exploit the news for their own narrow political aims. They began a campaign of hate against the Croats as a nation, and in favour of 'Greater Serbia', in the organs of propaganda under their control on British territory and especially in the United States. The Croatian ministers played into their hands by refusing publicly to condemn the massacres, reports of which they considered, perhaps rightly, to be much exaggerated. The gulf thus created between the Serbian and Croatian ministers was never bridged during the whole period of exile.

The second factor was the domination of the exiled government by its military and civilian officials. The ministers were democrats, but their policy was executed by diplomats who had made their careers under the dictatorships of Alexander and Paul, and communications with Yugoslavia were in the hands of officers some of whom were utterly opposed to democratic ideas and methods. These men intrigued to get control of the few Yugoslav armed forces in the Middle East, and when Colonel Mihailović first established wireless contact with the exiles there was a scramble for control of communications with him. The elevation of Mihailović to the rank of general, and his appointment as War Minister in the cabinet of Professor Jovanović, which replaced that of General Simović in January 1942, were to some extent a part of this scramble for power among the cliques in exile. The political problems of the Yugoslav emigration thus resembled those of the Polish, but on a smaller and pettier scale.

The British military authorities, wishing to help any anti-Axis resistance, decided, as soon as they received information about Mihailović, to send a British mission to arrange wireless contact

between him and the British Command in the Middle East. The first British officer, Captain Hudson, arrived in October 1941. He was for a time with the partisans, then returned to Mihailović and went with him to Montenegro. In the winter of 1942 the British mission was reinforced, and was commanded by Colonel Bailey. Throughout this period few supplies could be flown to Mihailović, as all available aircraft were needed to support operations in the Western Desert.

During the winter of 1942-3 the reports of the British mission with Mihailović revealed the extent of Mihailović's co-operation with the Italians in Montenegro and the coastal provinces. At the same time information from other sources became available which showed that the partisan movement was a much more serious force than had been supposed. The Middle East Command decided to establish contact with Tito. At the end of May 1943 Captain Deakin reached Tito's headquarters. In September a larger mission, headed by Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean, M.P., arrived.<sup>1</sup> It was decided to give material support to the partisans. During the weeks following the Italian surrender, while some Dalmatian islands and a strip of mainland coast were in partisan hands, some equipment was shipped to them from the 'heel' of Italy. But after the Germans cleared the coast in November, only airborne supplies could be sent, and during the winter flying was difficult. A partisan military delegation, headed by Colonel Velebit, came to Alexandria to discuss future supplies with the commanders-in-chief of the three services in the Middle East, but little could actually be done till the winter was over. There is some irony in the fact that one of the few services rendered by the British to Tito at this period was to convey to him a Soviet military mission, headed by Lieut.-General Korneev.

Serious Allied help to the partisans only began in the spring of 1944. It is therefore quite unjust to describe Tito's forces as 'a British creation'. For three years the partisans had conducted, in complete physical isolation, a heroic struggle, and in September 1943 they had themselves obtained the equipment of several surrendering Italian divisions. However, after April 1944 there is no doubt that Allied help was of great value. Very substantial supplies of small arms, automatic weapons, medical stores, clothing and boots, and a certain amount of heavier arms, were received.<sup>1</sup> A further important form of help was the evacuation

<sup>1</sup> For Brigadier Maclean's own account see his book *Eastern Approaches*. It is especially valuable for its account of the type and quantity of British help to Tito.

by air, from various improvised landing-grounds, of partisan wounded, the protection of whom had previously been a heavy burden as it had occupied large numbers of healthy men needed for battle. During 1944 more than 10,000 military and 2,000 civilian casualties were thus evacuated. During all this period Soviet supplies, from the Soviet mission established in Italy under Allied operational control, were quite negligible.

An important form of Allied help was propaganda. From the beginning of 1944 B.B.C. broadcasts urged Yugoslavs to join Tito. The appearance of growing numbers of partisans in British battle-dress was proof that the Western Powers were on Tito's side. The flow of recruits to Tito's forces therefore rapidly increased.

The Allied Mediterranean air forces also gave direct support when possible to partisan land forces. The most important example was in June 1944. The Germans made a well-planned parachutist attack on Tito's headquarters at Drvar in Bosnia. Within a few hours the Allied air forces had destroyed, in the air or on the ground, the German aircraft used for this attack. At very sudden notice Allied aircraft evacuated Tito and his staff to Italy, whence they were later transported by sea to the Dalmatian island Vis.<sup>1</sup> This island, defended by a joint Yugoslav and British force, remained Tito's headquarters until the Red Army entered Yugoslavia in the autumn.

In June 1943 the exiled government of Professor Jovanović resigned. His successor, the Radical Party leader Trifunović, was no more successful. King Peter then decided to form a government of officials, led by the former Minister in Paris, Božidar Purić. This government too maintained a 'Great Serbian' outlook, was devoted to Mihailović, and incapable of coming to terms with the partisans. Purić did, however, make an approach to Moscow. In the spring of 1942 the Soviet government had approached the Jovanović cabinet with the proposal of a treaty of

<sup>1</sup> Marshal Tito himself ostentatiously used the one Soviet aircraft which took part in the evacuation together with sixteen Allied aircraft. Soviet propaganda in 1945-48 tried to make out that the Soviet air force saved the partisans. Soviet journalists toured Yugoslavia in 1946, including the well-known Konstantin Simonov, and sent back to their readers in the U.S.S.R. versions of the exploits of the 'Soviet falcons', and the people's gratitude to them, which at least do credit to their reputations as imaginative writers. More recently, however, the Soviet line has changed. At the trials of Rajk and Kostov in 1949, the Drvar evacuation was 'proved' by the 'confessions' of witnesses to have been a plot by which Tito placed himself in the hands of his 'masters', the British secret service. That Tito was a British puppet is, however, hardly confirmed by the fact that in the autumn he suddenly left Vis by air for an unknown destination, without warning to the British mission, and that it was not until some weeks later that Stalin himself told Mr. Churchill that he had been in Moscow. See Maclean, *op. cit.*

mutual assistance. The offer had been politely refused on the general ground that the lesser allies should not conclude permanent alliances with the allied Great Powers until the war was over. This was the view of the British government, which had also believed that the Soviet government took the same view. The Yugoslav refusal was, however, interpreted in Moscow as due to anti-Soviet prejudice. In October 1943 Purić suggested an alliance to Moscow. It was refused and the Soviet government chose to use the Tass press agency, rather than diplomatic channels, to express its surprise that a government which still included the fascist Mihailović should have made such a proposal.

In November 1943 a second session of the partisan assembly A.V.N.O.J. was held in Jajce in Bosnia. The assembly formally declared itself 'the supreme executive and legislative body of the Yugoslav State'; denied the right of the exiled government to represent Yugoslavia 'anywhere and before any one'; and announced its intention to 'examine' all international commitments undertaken by the exiles and to repudiate any commitments undertaken by them in future. It then conferred on Tito the title of Marshal, and elected a provisional government, entitled National Committee of Liberation, with Tito as Premier, three vice-premiers, and thirteen 'trustees' charged with departmental duties. Most sensational of all was a resolution forbidding King Peter to return to Yugoslavia, and stating that 'the question of king and monarchy will be settled by the people by its own will after the liberation of the whole country'.

At the Tehran conference or soon afterwards the 'Big Three' decided that Allied support should be transferred entirely to Tito, and that the British mission with Mihailović should be withdrawn. But during the first months of 1944 British diplomacy made strenuous efforts to achieve a compromise between Tito and King Peter. On 1 June 1944 the king was persuaded to replace Purić as Premier by Dr. Ivan Šubašić, the former Governor of Croatia, who had spent the greater part of his exile in the United States, had kept out of party politics, had stood unswervingly for Yugoslav unity against both Serbian and Croatian separatism, and had publicly expressed sympathy for the partisan movement. During the summer Šubašić visited Tito on Vis. They both met Mr. Churchill and General Wilson in Italy. Šubašić took back to London with him two representatives of the National Committee of Liberation, who entered his cabinet.

But when the defection of Rumania and Bulgaria brought the

Red Army into Serbia, it became clear that the Soviet Union was the Power which would have the largest influence in Yugoslavia. At the end of October Šubašić flew to liberated Belgrade, and went on from there to Moscow. Early in December Šubašić and Tito signed an agreement in Belgrade. A united government was set up, with Tito as Premier and Šubašić as Foreign Minister. A Regency of three was to be created to exercise state sovereignty until the question of monarchy or republic was decided. Šubašić then returned to London, where he found the king understandably reluctant to accept the agreement. A government crisis lasted through January 1945. On 29 January the king at last consented to transfer his prerogatives to the Regency. Soon afterwards Šubašić returned to Belgrade, and on 7 March 1945 the united government came into being. Thus the long struggle between Tito's communists and the representatives of the old regime had ended with the complete victory of the former, which had received the unwilling but formally binding sanction of the Western Powers as well as the enthusiastic support of the Soviet Union.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The British and American governments never recognised the German annexation of Bohemia-Moravia and the creation of an independent Slovak state. The Soviet government did both after the Soviet-German pact. The Czechoslovak legation in Moscow was closed, and a Soviet legation was appointed to Tiso's fascist government in Slovakia on 17 September 1939.

The first step towards a recognition of Czechoslovakia as a belligerent ally was the agreement, signed on 2 October 1939 by Daladier for the French government and the former Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, Osusky, 'in the name of the Provisional Government of the Czechoslovak Republic', for the purpose of creating an autonomous Czechoslovak army, fighting under its own standards as a part of the French forces. Shortly afterwards a Czechoslovak National Committee was formed, under the leadership of ex-President Dr. Beneš. This committee was recognised as 'qualified to represent the Czechoslovak people' by the governments of France (14 November 1939) and Britain (20 December 1939). After the collapse of France the Czechoslovak committee and most of the Czechoslovak troops in France were evacuated to Britain. In July 1940 the committee declared itself the Provisional Government of Czechoslovakia, with Dr. Beneš as President and Mgr. Šramek as Premier. It received pro-

visional recognition from the British government, and this was extended to full recognition on 18 July 1941. The United States established full diplomatic relations with the Provisional Czechoslovak Government on 31 July 1941. A year later an important remaining doubt was removed. Britain had recognised the Czechoslovak government, but what was meant by Czechoslovakia—the republic of 1918–38, or the rump republic of 1938–9? On 5 August 1942 Mr. Eden officially informed Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, that the British government was entirely free from any engagements undertaken at Munich, and that ‘at the final settlement of the Czechoslovak frontiers . . . they will not be influenced by any changes effected in and since 1938’. On 29 September 1942 General de Gaulle made a statement to the same effect in the name of France.<sup>1</sup>

The German invasion of Russia brought a revision of Soviet policy to Czechoslovakia. On 18 July the Soviet government established diplomatic relations with the Czechoslovak government, and concluded a military alliance against Germany which amounted to a renewal of the lapsed treaty of 1935. An agreement was made for the organisation of Czechoslovak forces under the operational control of the Red Army but owing allegiance to the Czechoslovak government. The group of Czechoslovak communist exiles living in Moscow, led by Gottwald and Nejedlý, received no official status. This did not, however, mean that they ceased to count in the background. While the Soviet-German pact had lasted, they had bitterly denounced Beneš as a tool of Western imperialists: now they energetically supported the war effort of Czechoslovakia, and worked busily to infiltrate and indoctrinate the units formed on Soviet soil. There were also communists among the exiles in the West, the most important being the Czech Nosek and the Slovak Clementis.

Beneš had always been pro-Russian. He had believed that events would force Russia on to the Allied side, and now he felt himself proved right. While maintaining good relations with Britain and the United States, he inevitably drew nearer to the U.S.S.R. When the tide turned on the Eastern Front, it began to seem probable that Czechoslovakia would be liberated from East rather than West. The memory of Munich reminded him that it was unwise to rely on the protection of the Western Powers

<sup>1</sup> For details of the Czechoslovak government's formal relations with its allies, see Táboraky, *The Czechoslovak Cause*. For a more personal record, see Sir R. Bruce-Lockhart in *Slavonic Review*, January 1950.

against a powerful neighbour, and Soviet-Polish relations were a grim warning of the dangers of antagonising Moscow. Beneš knew that the Soviet leaders were holding Gottwald and his friends in reserve, to be used if necessary in the same role as the Union of Polish Patriots. So he decided to visit Moscow in December 1943 and sign a treaty of mutual assistance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. He acted against the advice of the British government, which believed that the Great Powers were pledged to a 'self-denying ordinance' about concluding alliances with small allies while the war was on. But Beneš felt that no time could be lost.

His action seemed justified by the decisions of the Great Allies during the winter of 1943-4, which placed Czechoslovakia in the Soviet operational sphere. A Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement signed in 1944 provided that the Red Army should hand over civil administration behind the front on liberated Czechoslovak territory to representatives of the Czechoslovak government. Beneš sent a prominent social democrat, Němec, as his representative on liberated territory, with the rank of Minister. He met with little co-operation from the Soviet authorities on the spot, and was unable to prevent the communists from organising propaganda in Ruthenia—the first Czechoslovak territory to be liberated—for the incorporation of that province in the U.S.S.R. Neither Němec nor Beneš himself was able to persuade the Soviet government to give effective help to the Slovak rising. When the Red Army front again moved forward early in 1945, it seemed to Beneš a matter of urgency to return to Czechoslovakia. If the legal government were not there when Slovakia was liberated, agitation might start for the incorporation of Slovakia too in the Soviet Union. In March 1945 the President left England for Moscow. On 22 March the new Czechoslovak government, whose Premier was the former diplomatic representative of the republic in Moscow, and a pliable instrument of Soviet policy, Zdeněk Fierlinger, set itself up in Košice. This city gave its name to the political programme of the first government of liberated Czechoslovakia.

The liberation of Prague was delayed by considerations of Great Power prestige. In the first days of May, General Patton's forces were rushing across central Germany when Prague revolted against the Germans. At this time the Red Army was still held up by stubborn German resistance in Moravia. It had been agreed between the two commands that American troops should

not advance beyond a line from Plzeň to Budějovice. General Eisenhower sent a personal message to the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, General Antonov, suggesting that Patton might go on and relieve Prague. Antonov bitterly opposed the suggestion on the ground that Prague must be liberated by Soviet troops. Several hundred Czechs paid with their lives for this insistence on Soviet prestige. The price in blood would have been higher still if the forces of the Soviet renegade General Vlasov had not turned against their German patrons at a critical moment. These facts did not deter the communists from later asserting, through the mouth of the egregious Professor Nějedly and others, that the Americans had deliberately left Prague to its fate because they hated the Czech workers.<sup>1</sup>

The increase of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, at the expense of the Western Powers, during the last months of the war has inevitably caused bitter comment. Some maintain, not only that Britain betrayed her best friends, especially in Poland and Yugoslavia, but that the betrayal was due to the influence of subversive, sinister and disloyal persons.<sup>2</sup> This theory is not convincing. It is true that there were important differences between the military authorities, who tended to regard any resistance movement in occupied territory as a potential ally, who was tying down enemy troops and should be given material aid when physical conditions permitted, and the diplomats, who were unwilling to help towards power any groups whose policy might be hostile when the war was over. But the decisions were taken neither by the military commanders nor by the diplomats, but by the governments of Britain and the United States, which had information from many sources and took both military and political factors into account. It can hardly be imagined that Churchill and Roosevelt were unaware of the potential conflict between military needs and post-war aims. They decided to give priority to the first.<sup>3</sup> They knew what they were doing, and the responsibility for the result lies with them.

The Western military commanders believed that victory could be most quickly won by concentrating their main blow in France. If a different course of action had caused the war to last longer, the

<sup>1</sup> Deane, *Strange Alliance*. General Deane was head of the United States military mission in Moscow, and personally dealt with General Eisenhower's message. Vlasov surrendered to the Americans, who later handed him over to the Soviet authorities, at the request of the latter. He was executed.

<sup>2</sup> See Voigt, *Pax Britannica*, pp. 245-8

<sup>3</sup> See the interesting account of Churchill's view of the Yugoslav problem in Brigadier Maclean's *Eastern Approaches*, pp. 402-3.

people of London and southern England would have been subjected to continued attack by V.1 and V.2 weapons. Perhaps it would have been better so. Perhaps the Western armies should have landed in the Balkans, should have discouraged King Michael of Rumania from surrendering to the Red Army, even if they had had to leave the Channel ports, with their flying-bomb and rocket bases, in German hands. Perhaps Britain may yet have to pay a heavier price than this. But it is too much to expect that a British government should, for the sake of problematic future dangers, subject its people to avoidable suffering on this scale.

It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to win the war against Germany and Japan without the participation of the Soviet Union. During the common war effort, the leaders of the Soviet Union no doubt regarded us as enemies: such an attitude was not possible for the leaders or the public in democratic countries. To the British and American peoples it was unthinkable in 1945 that the newly found atomic weapon should be used to force out of Europe those whom they had for four years regarded as their allies. That leaders and public in Britain and America took an optimistic view of their Soviet co-belligerents was due to the general ignorance of the nature and aims of communism, for which the main responsibility must fall on those who ruled the democracies between 1917 and 1939. Western policy from 1941 to 1945 was neither very clever nor very noble, but with military facts and public opinion as they were, it is hard to see how it could have been much different.

*Part Three*  
*SOVIETISATION*

CHAPTER EIGHT  
THE SEIZURE OF POWER

THE PATTERN

THE regime which has arisen, with local variations, throughout the zone of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe has become known as 'Popular Democracy'. Though this tautological phrase is an abuse of language, it is a convenient label, and will be used in the rest of this book. Apologists of the regime, both in Eastern Europe and in the West, especially those Western fellow-travellers whose task is to persuade their compatriots that the regime is an improved version of western socialism, and even derives from the liberal tradition, insist on the originality of 'Popular Democracy', and the differences between it and the regime prevailing in the U.S.S.R. But every now and then an East European communist of unimpeachable authority lets the cat out of the bag. In his speech to the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, delivered on 25 December 1948, George Dimitrov, former General Secretary of the Comintern and Premier of Bulgaria, 1946-9, declared: 'The Soviet regime and the Popular Democratic regime are two forms of one and the same system of government, based on the union between the town and agricultural workers. Both are based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. Soviet experience is the only and the best pattern for the building of socialism in our country as well as in other countries of Popular Democracy.' And Matthias Rákosi, leader of the Hungarian communists, a Comintern veteran of no less authority than Dimitrov, and one of the few men living who can claim to have been a member of a communist government as early as 1919, recently described 'Popular Democracy' in the party paper *Szabad Nép* as 'dictatorship of the proletariat without the Soviet form'. Soviets, Rákosi argued, were a form of government arising out of civil war, but the East European states had been spared civil war because the Soviet army, advancing through

their territory, had not only defeated the German army but had shattered the old political structure, and disarmed the old ruling classes, of Eastern Europe. Thus Rákosi admitted, what fellow-travellers in the West have taken such pains to deny, that the 1949 version of 'proletarian dictatorship' was imposed ready-made by the Red Army.

Rákosi's statement is in fact an over-simplification. His references to the 'soviet form' will be discussed in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup> At this point, however, we must point out that two countries in Eastern Europe—Yugoslavia and Albania—were not spared a civil war, and that a third, Poland, experienced a kind of 'perverted foreign-imported civil war. Rákosi's explanation of the origin of the new versions of 'proletarian dictatorship' is therefore only applicable to four countries—Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. But the words of Dimitrov are applicable to all the regimes which have arisen from the political struggles in Eastern Europe since the end of the war.

In Yugoslavia and Albania, as we have seen, the Axis invaders destroyed the old political structure, and could fill the gap only by their incompetent and unpopular quislings. The communists then fought not only a national war against the invaders and quislings, but also a civil war against the patriotic section of the conservative forces—Mihailović, the Balli Kombetar and the Zogists. They came out of the double war with a more or less 'monolithic' regime. Communist domination of the 'anti-fascist fronts' in both countries had been secured during the fighting. Temporary acceptance by Tito of some liberal exiles from the West made no real change, while Enver Hoxha did not even have to make this formal concession. The political battle had been won.

The course of events in Poland in some ways resembled that in Yugoslavia. The German invaders smashed the old political structure, and showed special savagery to the educated class. But the educated class and the conservative forces were strongly represented, together with the workers and peasants, in the Home Army. The resistance movement in Poland fought only a national war, not a civil war. But when the Red Army entered Poland it fought a double war, for it considered not only the Germans but also the Polish resistance movements as its enemies. The Soviet leaders knew how deep an impression the Katyn case had made. They knew how hostile to them was the Polish army in the West, with its fine war record, and consequent high prestige both in Poland and among the Allies. They created still further bitterness

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 299.

by their failure to save insurgent Warsaw. Having chosen their policy, they took pains to use willing Poles to achieve their aims. The Polish civil war was imported from Russia, and its communist belligerent was created in Russia. The Red Army, the Polish divisions in its ranks, and the Polish security forces of the Lublin Committee together disarmed and hounded down the Home Army. The destruction of the old social and political regime, which was achieved in Yugoslavia and Albania partly by the Germans and partly by a genuine civil war, was achieved in Poland partly by the Germans and partly by the Red Army.

The result was not quite the same. In both Yugoslavia and Poland, democratic exiles returned from the West as a result of pressure by the Western Powers. But whereas in Yugoslavia they had no chance of organising themselves into a force, in Poland they were for a time successful. Mikołajczyk regrouped his great party, and for two years fought a bitter rearguard action. The reasons for the difference are that the Polish Peasant Party was a far more popular and living organisation than were the old democratic parties in Yugoslavia; that the Yugoslav partisan movement was a genuine popular movement, while the Lublin Committee was bogus; and that the Yugoslav communists had built up an efficient police apparatus of their own, while the Polish communists had to rely at first on the Russian military and police machines.

In the other four countries there had been no civil war. German persecution had caused heavy losses to the Czech intelligentsia, but the Czech middle class—both business and professional—was far too strong and numerous to be destroyed. In Slovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria the social structure was little different in 1945 from what it had been in 1939. In all four countries therefore the post-war period began with coalition governments, and sovietisation was only achieved by three stages.

The first stage was the genuine coalition. Several political parties, differing in social basis, ideology and long-term programme, and possessing each its own party organisation, combined on a common short-term programme, which nominally included a purge of fascists, fairly radical social reforms, political freedom and a foreign policy friendly to both the U.S.S.R. and the Western Powers. Real freedom of speech and meeting existed, and there was little political censorship except on one subject—the U.S.S.R. Not only might Soviet policy not to be criticised, but it was hardly possible to write anything about any aspect of Russia which did not

coincide with the official Soviet line. But this seemed a small price to pay. Apart from this, a wide variety of opinions, representing various political views and social categories, could be freely expressed. Nevertheless already during the first stage the communists seized control of most of the 'levers of power'—in particular the security police, the army general staff and the publicity machine. The first stage lasted only a short time in Rumania and Bulgaria. The forced resignation of Dr. G. M. Dimitrov from the secretaryship of the Agrarian Union in January 1945 was the decisive moment in Bulgaria. The practical breakdown of the first stage became clear when the Agrarian and Social Democrat Parties were 'captured' by communist nominees in May, and was formally completed by the resignation of Petkov and his colleagues in August. In Rumania the change came suddenly in March 1945, when Vyshinski forced King Michael to give power to Groza's 'National Democratic Front' government. Hungary passed more slowly out of the first stage. The decisive crisis was the arrest by the Soviet authorities of Béla Kovács in February 1947, and the transition was completed when Nagy was replaced as Premier by Dinnyes four months later. Czechoslovakia remained in the first stage up to Gottwald's 'February (police-) revolution' of 1948.

The second stage may be described as the bogus coalition. The governments still contain non-communist parties, but these are represented by men chosen no longer by the party membership but by the communists. The essential feature of this stage is that the peasant parties, and any bourgeois parties who may have been tolerated at the beginning, are driven into opposition. In this stage opposition is still tolerated, but becomes increasingly difficult. Opposition newspapers may be published, but their distribution becomes dangerous in the capital and almost impossible outside it. Censorship is exercised not only by the government but also by the communist-controlled printers' trade unions, which 'indignantly refuse to print reactionary calumnies against the people's authorities'. Opposition meetings are broken up by lorryloads of communist toughs, while the police 'objectively' take no action against aggressors or aggressed. In Poland this stage existed from the 'liberation' onwards, though it was only formally established in the summer of 1946 when Mikołajczyk formally left the government of which he had been no more than a formal member. It came to an end in the autumn of 1947. In Bulgaria and Rumania it lasted from the spring of 1945 to the

autumn of 1947. The introduction into the Groza government of one representative each of the two main opposition parties, as a result of the Moscow conference of December 1945, made no difference, as these men were not consulted by their cabinet 'colleagues' and wielded no power. In Hungary the second stage lasted for about a year (spring 1947 to spring 1948), and was not finally liquidated until the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty and dissolution of Baránkovich's Catholic Party at the end of 1948. Czechoslovakia in 1948 leaped almost directly from the first to the third stage, for after the 'February (police-) revolution' no opposition was tolerated.

The third stage is the 'monolithic' regime. There is a single communist-managed 'front', with one hierarchy, one centralised discipline and one organisation. An important feature of this stage is the enforced fusion of the well-purged social democrats with the communists in a United Workers' Party. This is of course more important in the three Central European countries, where social democracy has a strong tradition, than in the four south-eastern countries, where it has not. In Rumania and Bulgaria the social democrats played a minor but not insignificant part between 'liberation' and absorption: in Yugoslavia and Albania they did not appear at all. In the third stage all open opposition is suppressed, and its leaders either escape abroad or are arrested as 'spies of the Western imperialists' and either executed or sentenced to long prison terms. This third stage was established in Yugoslavia and Albania already in 1945: in the other countries its preparation was pushed rapidly ahead after the foundation of the Cominform, and it was completed by the end of 1948. The main landmarks in this stage were the trials of Petkov and Maniu and the flight of Mikołajczyk (all in the autumn of 1947); the purge of the Hungarian Social Democrat Party (March 1948) and the liquidation of 'bourgeois democracy' by Gottwald's police. The most eloquent and tragic symbols of the change are the deaths of Jan Masaryk and Eduard Beneš.

#### POLAND

The Polish Provisional Government recognised by the Great Powers in July 1945 was nominally a coalition. No less than five parties took part in it—Polish (Communist) Workers' Party (P.P.R.), Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), Democratic Party, Labour Party, and People's (Peasant) Party. Mikołajczyk was a vice-premier and also Minister of Agriculture, and one of

his main followers, Kiernik, was Minister of Public Administration. In fact, however, the communists had well used the period of 'liberation' by the Red Army, and of the Lublin Committee, to install themselves in the key positions and to place their trusted agents or helpless tools in key positions within the other parties.

The police were controlled by the communists from the start. The Ministry of the Interior was divided into two ministries, Public Administration and Security. The former, under Kiernik, dealt only with routine bureaucratic matters. The latter controlled the armed security organisations. It was headed by the prominent communist Radkiewicz, and its senior personnel were soon almost exclusively communist. It had three organisations—the Security Office (U.B.), the Internal Security Corps (K.B.W.) and the Volunteer Citizens' Militia Reserve (O.R.M.O.). The U.B. was the secret political police, the brains of the system. The K.B.W. was a military organisation, which carried out operations in close co-operation with Red Army units against the remaining guerrilla forces, and used its opportunities to terrorise the peasants, carrying out summary executions and destroying houses as reprisals. The O.R.M.O. was created only in April 1946. Its membership exceeded 100,000. It was recruited mainly from industrial workers, and was commanded from the beginning by communists, who indoctrinated its members so that they formed a private army of the Communist Party. It was in effect a part-time military organisation, forming a politically reliable reserve for the regular armed forces.

The regular army itself was of course also controlled at least at the top by communists. Very few former Polish officers were available. Many former officers were in prisoners' camps in Germany, many had been massacred at Katyn or had disappeared elsewhere in Russia, others were in the Polish army in exile, others had served at home in the Home Army and so were regarded with suspicion. Those former officers who were accepted in the new army consisted mainly of those who had served in the divisions commanded by Berling in 1944-5. They included a large number of Red Army officers seconded to the Polish forces, some of whom were of Polish origin. The Minister of War and Commander-in-Chief was Marshal Zymierski. The new officer corps included Russians whose knowledge of the Polish language was imperfect.

Another source of communist strength was control of the western territories acquired from Germany. At the end of 1945 a separate Ministry of Regained Territories was set up, and was entrusted to

the communist vice-premier and general secretary of P.P.R., Gomulka. Thereby all administration of these areas was taken out of the hands of Kiernik and his Ministry of Public Administration. The new territories were rich in agricultural land, farm equipment and industrial jobs, whose distribution gave the communists magnificent opportunities of patronage. Peasants from the over-populated parts of central Poland, seeking new land, had to obey the orders of the Communist Party. The western regions soon became a communist state within the Polish state. The communists received support from the Red Army, which of course occupied this area in great strength during and after the operations against the Germans. For a time large tracts of land were given as farms to the Red Army, to support part of their needs in food.

The removal of the German population was swift and drastic. Before 1939 this territory had had between eight and nine million German inhabitants. Most fled as the German army retreated, but some two million were expelled after the end of the war. Gradually the empty spaces filled up. According to Polish official figures, in October 1948 the population was 5,500,000 of whom about 1,000,000 had been there before the war, and most of these were, or declared themselves to be, Poles. Of the newcomers, 1,800,000 came from the eastern provinces ceded to the Soviet Union, 100,000 from Western Europe or Britain, and 2,500,000 from over-populated districts in central Poland.

The repatriation of Poles from the West was a cause of constant friction with the Western governments, especially with the British. Polish government propaganda bitterly attacked General Anders and the command of the troops in exile, accusing them of using both propaganda and pressure to prevent their men from returning home, and the British government of condoning or even encouraging their action. Of the hostility of Anders and his officers to the new Poland there was no doubt, but most Poles in exile needed neither propaganda nor pressure to persuade them to stay abroad. Those who had spent two years in the U.S.S.R. in the first part of the war were especially unwilling to return. Polish government representatives were, however, allowed to put their case to Polish troops in Britain, and in fact some 110,000 decided to return. For the rest it was decided to create a Polish Resettlement Corps, which began recruiting in January 1947. About 100,000 out of 142,000 joined, and by the end of 1947 more than half of them had obtained civil employment in Britain.

As long as Polish forces had been stationed in considerable

numbers in Italy, Austria and Germany, there were some grounds for alarm in Warsaw. Both the Polish communists and the followers of General Anders seem to have believed that a new war would soon break out between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers. In this event the Anders army would have played a role similar to Pilsudski's legions in 1914, and would have received help from the remnants of the Home Army within Poland. It is impossible to judge the accuracy of the accusations made in the Polish press and in the various trials of alleged subversive groups which took place in the first two years after 'liberation'. But it is certain that irreconcilable groups of guerrillas remained for some time in the Polish forests, and that there were assassinations of government officials and policemen. Some of these groups may have had contact by courier or wireless with Polish forces in Germany or Britain. During the first months guerrilla actions caused real anxiety to the Polish government, but once their own police forces and political armies were strong, the existence of guerrillas became a blessing to them. The guerrilla danger was used as an excuse for repressive measures against the legal Polish People's Party of Mikołajczyk. The peasant leader himself was accused of secret dealings with the 'underground' and with Anders, on behalf of his masters, the British imperialists.

The Lublin Committee already in 1944 had contained representatives of a 'People's Party' which claimed to be the continuation of the pre-war peasant movement of that name. It was in fact a mixture of genuine members of the pre-war peasant movement and stooges of the communists. When Mikołajczyk returned to Poland, he contacted its president and general secretary, Bańczyk and Ścibiorek. They agreed with him to re-organise the party over the whole country, with the veteran leader Witos as president and with Mikołajczyk and Bańczyk as the two vice-presidents. The communists objected strongly to this, and when Bańczyk called a meeting of the Supreme Council of the party they packed it with their men and passed a resolution expelling him from the party. In these circumstances Mikołajczyk had no alternative but to organise his party as a new party under the title Polish People's Party (P.S.L.). Most of the genuine supporters of the peasant movement joined him, and the Lublinite People's Party (S.L.) remained as a bogus peasant organisation led by nominees of the communists. Shortly afterwards a member of the executive committee of P.S.L., Kojder, was abducted and murdered by communists in Przemyśl. In Decem-

ber Ścibiorek was murdered by members of the security police in uniform. The communists at first refused Mikołajczyk's demand for a special commission of investigation on the ground that this implied 'lack of confidence in the Minister of Security'. Later the commission was authorised, but never operated. A year later a trial was held of some policemen and of a woman employed by the U.S. Embassy, at which the policemen 'confessed' that they had murdered Ścibiorek on instructions from the 'underground', and the woman that she had tried to smuggle them out of the country.

The first congress of P.S.L. was held on 19 January 1946. It then claimed to have 600,000 members. Witos had died in October 1945. He was succeeded as President by Mikołajczyk. Besides a programme of radical social reform, especially in the interests of the peasants, the congress issued resolutions demanding respect for the laws, independence of the law-courts and local self-government. The communist reaction to the congress was increased pressure on P.S.L. to join the government bloc—P.P.R., P.P.S., S.L. and Democratic Party—which was preparing a joint list for the impending elections, each party being assigned beforehand its share of seats in the future parliament. Mikołajczyk resisted the pressure, as he wished the elections to be a real test of public opinion. Believing sincerely that he had the great majority of the Polish nation behind him, he replied that he would only join the bloc if P.S.L. was given three-quarters of the seats in the future parliament. It is not unlikely that this represented the state of opinion, but the demand was of course unacceptable to the communists.

The terror of the police forces against P.S.L. supporters increased in many parts of the country. Throughout the year, though P.S.L. nominally formed part of the government, it was treated not only as an opposition party but as an outlaw. Mikołajczyk was repeatedly denounced by the communist press as a 'British agent'. In March a congress of the 'Peasant Self-help' co-operative organisation was called in Warsaw. Over 2,000 delegates were elected, of whom some 800 arrived, the rest having been arrested on their way. The premises reserved for the congress were filled by U.B. officials and communist nominees. When Mikołajczyk, as Minister of Agriculture, began to address the meeting, he was shouted down by the communist stooges. He then left the hall, and led the genuine delegates to the central office of P.S.L., where the meeting was held. Next day the police raided the P.S.L. office, confiscated papers and arrested some

employees. Soon after this the 'Peasant Self-help' was taken over by communist nominees.

During this time the provisional parliament continued to be the Council of the Homeland (K.R.N.), first formed in the Lublin period and slightly enlarged to give P.S.L. representation. At the spring session of K.R.N. Bańczyk demanded that elections be held by 28 July, the anniversary of the Potsdam conference, which had spoken of Polish elections within a year. The communists, however, decided first to hold a referendum on three questions—for or against the abolition of a Second Chamber (Senate), the social reforms (land reform and nationalisation), and the new western frontier. Their aim was to present an impression of unanimity and so increase the argument in favour of a single list for the eventual parliamentary elections. Mikołajczyk decided to instruct his supporters to vote 'No' on the first question, not because he had any great belief in the Senate, but simply in order to give opposition a chance to manifest itself. During the early summer several monster meetings were held by P.S.L. Early in June Radkiewicz announced that four branches of P.S.L. had been closed for collaboration with the underground organisations N.S.Z. or W.I.N.<sup>1</sup> The paper allocation of the P.S.L. newspaper *Gazeta Ludowa* was cut down. By the end of June Mikołajczyk claimed that 1,200 members of his party were under arrest. Polling took place on 30 June. The official election results showed a government majority of 68 per cent on the first question. Mikołajczyk maintained that there had been systematic falsification of results. In 2,805 polling areas in fourteen provinces, where the voting commissions had managed to save the poll-boxes from the police, the results were, Mikołajczyk claimed, 83 per cent against the government. He claimed that this result represented the opinion of the whole country.<sup>2</sup>

The next stage was the preparation of the parliamentary election fixed for January 1947. During the summer the leaders of P.P.R. and P.P.S. in turn visited Moscow. Terror against P.S.L. continued, and British and American notes of protest were ignored. The Stuttgart speech of U.S. Secretary of State Byrnes in September was used by the government as evidence that the Western Powers would back Germany against Poland. Mikołajczyk was at the time on an official mission in Denmark, and held

<sup>1</sup> For N.S.Z. see above, p. 114. W.I.N. are the Polish initials of 'Freedom and independence' (*wolność i niepodległość*).

<sup>2</sup> Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination*, pp. 180-5.

a press conference criticising the speech. But his remarks were not published in Poland, and he was represented as the willing tool of the Germanophile Western Powers. The Labour Party led by Popiel was at this time seized by communist nominees, led by a certain Widy-Wirski, and Popiel himself expelled. The new electoral law provided unequal constituencies, giving disproportionate representation to the western territories, the 'safe' communist state within the state. On 7 October P.S.L. officially decided to refuse to join the government bloc.

After this, persecution further increased. Two political trials were made to incriminate Mikołajczyk. In the first Count Grocholski, a personal friend of the British Ambassador, was condemned for passing him information on behalf of the 'underground', and he was executed. In the second a former Home Army officer, Rzepecki, 'confessed' that Mikołajczyk had given him advice which had caused him to continue armed resistance to the government with his guerrilla forces, despite the amnesty. Government propaganda continually represented P.S.L. as the legal façade of a reactionary guerrilla underground movement.

It also attempted to win over peasant voters by allowing two minor parties to put up candidates independently of the government bloc. These were the bogus Labour Party of Widy-Wirski and the 'Polish People's Party—New Liberation', led by a certain Rek, who had been expelled from P.S.L. when it was discovered that he was being forced to work within it on behalf of the communists. Government supporters maintained that this splinter group and the bogus People's Party (S.L.) were the true representatives of the peasant movement, and that Mikołajczyk was working for the reactionary generals, landowners and capitalists and for the 'Western imperialists'. The only element of truth in this argument is that conservative Poles would be more likely to vote for P.S.L. than for any other party, as it was the least left-wing party allowed to stand. But neither Mikołajczyk nor his colleagues in the party leadership were in any sense reactionaries. They stood for radical reforms, respect for the law, freedom of opinion and national independence. They were for close co-operation with the U.S.S.R. but also with the West. It was the Soviet government which rejected their friendship, preferring wholeheartedly to back the communists. The mass support for Mikołajczyk, which was unmistakable as long as his party was allowed to hold meetings, came from both peasants and townsmen, including workers.

The elections were preceded by a series of trick decrees designed to make it difficult for P.S.L. to get its candidates recognised, and large-scale arrests and torture of sponsors of P.S.L. lists and of P.S.L. couriers bearing instructions from central office. According to Mikołajczyk, during the campaign period over 100,000 party members were in prison, and 142 of the party's candidates were arrested. In ten out of fifty-two electoral districts, with one-quarter of the country's population, the P.S.L. lists were disqualified. 'Voluntary open voting' took place in many districts, and workers in offices and factories were forced to march together to the polling-booth to vote demonstratively and publicly for the government. The official results gave the government bloc 394 seats, P.S.L. 28 and the pseudo-independent parties 22. The new government was headed by the socialist Cyrankiewicz. In the new parliament Mikołajczyk was attacked in increasingly violent language. A provisional constitution, based on the Soviet model, was adopted on 19 February 1947.

Persecution of P.S.L. continued throughout the year. After the refusal by the East European countries of the Marshall Plan, and the formation of the Cominform, in the autumn of 1947, the situation became more dangerous. Mikołajczyk received information that he would shortly be arrested and condemned to death. He decided that there was nothing more that he could do, that to continue the party's activity was only to expose Poles to useless sacrifice, and that the loss of his own life would be of no value. The treatment of Petkov and Maniu in the same months seemed to confirm his fears. He left Poland secretly at the end of October.

The only party which still had remnants of independence was now the Socialist Party (P.P.S.). From the 'liberation' onwards this had been a pale shadow of the old P.P.S. Some of the party's leaders were in exile (Arciszewski, Kwapiński, Ciołkosz), others had been killed by the Germans. One of them had been among the sixteen resistance leaders arrested by the Russians (Pużak). The revival of P.P.S. was in fact tolerated by the Soviet authorities in 1944-5 only on condition that the old leaders should play no part. Those who had played a leading part in the wartime W.R.N. were rejected. Cyrankiewicz, a minor figure in the party before 1939, was made general secretary on his return from Oświęcim concentration camp. Osóbka-Morawski and his R.P.P.S., which merged itself in the revived P.P.S., also played a leading part.

From the beginning the new P.P.S. leaders stressed their desire to 'co-operate loyally' with the communists. In November 1946 a

political alliance of the two parties was made, with special reference to the elections, but with a promise by both to respect each other's independent organisations. In December 1947 P.P.S. held a congress in Breslau. Lip service was paid to 'workers' unity', but Cyrankiewicz declared the time had not yet come for fusion. He changed his mind in March 1948, presumably as a result of events in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and perhaps after pressure from Cominform. Without consulting the party's executive committee, he suddenly informed the Warsaw P.P.S. organisation that he had decided on fusion.

Before this could take place the party had to be still further purged of 'right-wingers'. There had already been many purges of local organisations, especially in November 1946 and June 1947. After March 1948 the pace quickened. The whole executive committee of the P.P.S. in Łódź was removed, and dismissals took place all over the country. At last the fusion congress was held in Warsaw on 15 December 1948, and a Polish United Workers' Party was formed, with a new party statute closely modelled on that of the Soviet Communist Party. Fusion was in fact a polite name for the conquest of a great Polish party by a power clique of agents of a foreign power, achieved by three years of pressure, purges and terror. And if the P.P.S. leaders seem to have been weak, it must be remembered that they knew always that in the background was the military might of Russia. By the fusion congress the Polish communists completed their monopoly of political power.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

According to the Košice programme proclaimed by the new government on 22 March 1945, the restored republic was to be a state of Czechs and Slovaks. Local government was to be conducted by people's committees. The property of all Germans and Hungarians who had not actively opposed the occupying powers was to be confiscated. Foreign policy was to have a Slav orientation. The People's Front which formed the government was a coalition of independent parties, not, as in Yugoslavia, a single 'monolithic' organisation. The Czech parties were Communists, Social Democrats, National Socialists and People's (Catholic) Party, all of which had existed before 1938. The Slovak parties were Communists and Democrats.

The power of the communists was greater than a formal description would indicate. They held the Ministry of the Interior,

and so controlled the police. The National Security Corps (S.N.B.) was penetrated by them from the top downwards. They controlled its political sections from an early stage. The army led by General Svoboda on the Russian Front, had been considerably indoctrinated while undergoing training in the Soviet Union. The General Staff, and particularly its Intelligence Department, was a communist stronghold. The Communist Party held the Ministry of Agriculture, responsible for the distribution to peasants of land seized from Germans or 'collaborators'. The Ministry of Information, held by the communist Kopecky, controlled the Prague radio and the Union of Czechoslovak Youth (S.C.M.). Both were well infiltrated with communists. A prominent communist intellectual, Professor Nějedlý, was Minister of Education.

Probably the most useful weapon of communist policy was its control of the border areas. The flight or expulsion of three million Germans from Bohemia inevitably caused confusion. The vacuum was filled by representatives of the two communist Ministers of the Interior (Nosek) and Agriculture (D'uriš). The communists created in the border regions a party state within the state. Not only did the former German inhabitants suffer hardship—which most Czechs felt they richly deserved—but violence and injustice were committed by Czechs against Czechs. They were largely the work of recent recruits to the Communist Party. Not only did Soviet successes cause a vague enthusiasm for the communists among the naturally pro-Russian Czech people, but a whole host of opportunists and adventurers leaped on to the party band-wagon. The communist leaders, eager to win mass support as quickly as possible, did not discourage these recruits, though many brought little credit to the party. Confiscated German properties were placed under 'national administrators'. These lucrative positions lay largely within the communist patronage. The expulsions went rapidly ahead. By October 1946 they were officially declared ended. At this date 2,165,000 Germans had been expelled, and some 500,000 remained.<sup>1</sup> During the same period 1,800,000 Czechs moved in. Most were peasants, former landless labourers or dwarf holders from thickly populated parts of the Czech interior. In the border regions they acquired well-built German farms with fine livestock and equipment.

One of the first actions of the government was the cession of

<sup>1</sup> If these figures are correct, nearly 600,000 Germans had fled from Czechoslovak territory before the war was over. The pre-war German population of Czechoslovakia was 3,230,000.

Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to the Soviet Union. For the first month after the Red Army liberated this province in October 1944, the delegate of the Czechoslovak government, Němec, had worked satisfactorily with a self-constituted body called the Ruthenian National Council, led by a communist chairman, Turjanica. When in November Kiev radio began to demand the union of the province with the Ukrainian S.S.R., the Council suddenly abandoned its previous programme of Czechoslovak unity and demanded to be incorporated in the U.S.S.R. The Red Army authorities impeded Němec in his work and hindered his communications with his government. He had no choice but to visit Moscow to consult the Soviet government. Molotov then stated that his government could not remain deaf to an appeal from a Slav brother nation for union. It seems possible that the Soviet government's sudden change was influenced by its discovery of the strength of Ukrainian national feeling in eastern Galicia. It could not afford to leave any Ukrainians outside the Soviet frontiers. The formal cession of territory took place in June 1945.

The Provisional Parliament consisted of delegates nominated by the leaders of the six parties in equal proportion. The old administrative divisions were maintained, and were ruled by 'People's Committees'. Their composition was determined by agreement between the local party organisations. In practice the people's committees in the borderlands were dominated by communists, and even in the Czech interior the communists had more than their share of power. The Communist Party could have seized complete power in 1945 had it so wished. It deliberately chose not to do so. The responsibility for the choice lay with Gottwald, the party's leader and a Moscow-trained communist, who thus acquired the reputation, belied by later events, of a 'moderate and patriotic' communist. The Czech communists' action corresponded with the usual Soviet and communist tactics of the Popular Fronts pursued all over Europe, but its application was in practice more generous to the other parties than in neighbouring countries.

In December 1945 the Red Army evacuated Czechoslovakia, and the American forces which had occupied western Bohemia up to Plzeň also withdrew. The Soviet troops had not been popular. The usual undisciplined acts had occurred, but on a much smaller scale than in Hungary or Poland. The notion of 'German war booty' was at first widely interpreted by Soviet commanders, but, perhaps as a result of representations by the Czechoslovak

government in Moscow, abuses on this account soon diminished. The most important acquisition of property on Czechoslovak territory by the Soviet authorities was the Joachimsthal (Jachymov) uranium mines in Bohemia. They were handed over by the officials of the communist-controlled Ministry of the Interior on the spot. The cession was never approved by the cabinet as a whole.

The first parliamentary elections were held in May 1946. Czech and foreign observers were agreed that they were freely conducted by secret ballot. They were a big success for the Communist Party, which won 38 per cent of the poll (40 per cent in the Czech lands and 30 per cent in Slovakia). The Czech national socialists won 18 per cent, People's Party 16 per cent, social democrats 13 per cent and Slovak democrats 14 per cent (61 per cent in Slovakia alone). The communists had not only won the great majority of the Czech working class, but had received many peasant votes. This was due in large measure to the distribution by the communist Minister of Agriculture of land expropriated from Germans. The most important change since 1938 was the disappearance of the Agrarian Party. It had been banned on the grounds that its leaders had collaborated with the Germans after Munich. Before 1938 it had been supported by most Czech peasants and the greater part of the Czech business class. These had had to redistribute their votes among the four permitted Czech parties. It seems likely that the peasant vote had been divided between the communists and the People's Party, the former being more successful in Bohemia and the latter in Moravia. The middle class, especially the free professions, on the whole supported the National Socialist Party. Opportunists and careerists of all social classes were more likely to vote for communists than the others because it was widely believed that the communists, backed by the great U.S.S.R., were the 'coming party.'

In the new government the same communists held the Ministries of the Interior, Finance, Agriculture and Information, but the communist Nějedlý had to surrender Education to the national socialist Dr. Stransky. The national socialists also held Justice (Dr. Drtina) and Foreign Trade (Dr. Ripka). Each party had one vice-premier. The Prime Minister was the communist Gottwald.

The elections were a setback for the Communist Party in Slovakia. The Slovak National Council and the Board of Com-

missioners had to be reorganised on a basis of two to one in favour of the democrats, instead of fifty-fifty as hitherto. The Chairman of the Board remained a communist, Husak. Considerable confusion was caused by the fact that in several departments the Minister in Prague belonged to a different department from the Commissioner in Bratislava. For instance, Agriculture and Information were each represented by a communist in Prague and a democrat in Bratislava, while Education had a national socialist in Prague and a communist in Bratislava. The confusion was increased by the fact that the respective powers of the central government in Prague and the Board of Commissioners in Bratislava had not yet been clearly defined. There were in fact three points of view, which may be called Slovak nationalist, Czech nationalist and Czechoslovak communist.

The Slovak nationalists—who formed the bulk of the Democrat Party's supporters—wished the Board of Commissioners to have complete powers on all matters not of obvious concern both to Slovaks and Czechs. They would have liked the Republic to be a sort of federal union. The Czech nationalists wished a unitary state. Though they admitted in public the separate existence of a Slovak nation, many secretly clung to the old conception of a single Czechoslovak nation. This was also the view of President Beneš. They objected to a loose federal union on the grounds that it would be 'dualism', a word which had unfortunate associations in view of the experience of Austria-Hungary from 1867 to 1918. They proposed instead that three 'Land Governments' for the historic 'Lands' of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia should be set up. Under the central government these three Lands would have an equal degree of autonomy. The communists preferred the Soviet system. In their view, Slovakia should be given a status similar to that of a constituent republic in the Soviet Union. The Board of Commissioners would be an immediate executive authority in Slovakia, but would be subordinate in all political matters (including of course the main lines of economic policy) to the Prague government. The communists opposed the suggested division into three 'Lands', on the ground that this would create an unnecessary bureaucracy and would correspond to no real need. Moravians are in no way nationally distinct from Bohemians, whereas Slovaks differ from both. In practice, the communists had agitated for greater Slovak autonomy until the 1946 elections, but then stressed the political supremacy of the Prague government. In discussions of the

Slovak question there was a tendency to agreement between communists and Czech national socialists against Slovak democrats, who had some slight sympathy from the Czech People's Party.

Just as the relative strength of the Czech political parties had been changed by the disappearance of the Agrarian Party, so in Slovakia the disappearance of the fascist People's Party of ex-President Tiso had created an artificial situation. Four-fifths of the Slovaks are Catholics and one-fifth Protestant. The leaders and organisers of the new Democrat Party almost all came from the Protestant minority. But among the Slovak peasants the Catholic Church had not lost any of its influence. Within its ranks there were two political tendencies, a clerical fascism similar to that of Dollfuss in pre-Anschluss Austria, and a democratic movement similar to that of the M.R.P. in liberated France. The second tendency was stronger in 1946 than it had been under Tiso, but was only a growing minority. There was room for it within the Democrat Party, but not for the large mass of right-wing Catholic opinion. In the elections, however, right-wing Slovaks had clearly voted for the democrats in preference to the communists. Hence the accusation, repeated with increasing vehemence by the communists from May 1946 onwards, that the Democrat Party 'harboured fascists'. This may have been true of some of the democrat voters, but was certainly not true of the democrat leaders, who were men of known democratic convictions.

In the spring of 1947 a crisis arose in connection with the trial of the quisling ex-President Tiso. Tiso was formally guilty of treason. He had played an important part in the disruption of Czechoslovakia in both September 1938 and March 1939. Nevertheless he still enjoyed considerable popularity in the country. 'Slovak independence' had been a period of prosperity. Many Slovaks argued that Tiso acted as he did in March 1939 only because the alternative was a partition of Slovakia between Germany and Hungary. So strong was popular feeling in his favour that many Slovaks of strong democratic views, who had personally suffered under his regime, nevertheless argued that he should not be condemned to death on grounds of political expediency. The communists, however, were implacable. Tiso's greatest crime in their eyes was that he had declared war on the Soviet Union. In the established communist view, this is sacrilege, for which death is the only penalty. The social democrats followed the communists, and the national socialists took the formal view

that a traitor to the State must be punished. Only the Democrat Party, pressed by its supporters, pleaded for mercy. It received some wavering support from the People's Party, which was unwilling to see a Catholic priest executed. The decision rested with President Beneš. He decided that he could not use his prerogative of clemency against the advice of his government. Tiso was therefore hanged. The result was a growth of discontent in Slovakia which had dangerous implications.

Up till the summer of 1947, despite continual friction, the coalition had worked. Abuses were diminishing and the rule of law was almost completely established. Debates in parliament were free and often bitter. Non-communist members of parliament and newspapers had shown great courage in unmasking acts of injustice by communist bosses in the provinces. The communists were on the defensive but respected the Constitution. The summer of 1947 was the turning-point. On 7 July the Czechoslovak government accepted an invitation to a preliminary conference in Paris on the Marshall Plan. On 8 July a government delegation of Gottwald, Masaryk and Drtina, then in Moscow, received an ultimatum from Stalin. They were told that they must at once decide whether they 'considered the Pact of Friendship and Mutual Aid between our countries valid, or prefer to go to Paris'. After Gottwald had telephoned Prague, the government reluctantly agreed to reject the invitation. An official statement published on 10 July declared: 'Czechoslovak participation would be accepted as a deed aimed against friendship with the Soviet Union and the other Slav allies'.<sup>1</sup>

The rejection by the East European countries of the Marshall Plan marked the end of the Popular Fronts in all Eastern Europe. It was shortly followed by the creation of the Cominform. The communist parties now had the task of obtaining complete control. In Czechoslovakia this meant that they must obtain a majority in parliament. This could be secured if the social democrats would collaborate unreservedly with the communists. But the social democrat view was still that a People's Front of all democratic parties should be maintained, that they therefore should not have closer relations with the communists than with the other parties of the Front. From July 1947 to February 1948 there was a permanent political crisis in Czechoslovakia which ended in communist victory.

<sup>1</sup> For a full and authoritative account of this episode, see *Le coup de Prague*, by Dr. Hubert Ripka, who at this time was Czechoslovakia's Minister of Foreign Trade.

The dress rehearsal took place in November in Slovakia. The Commissioner of Internal Affairs, General Ferencik, announced the discovery of a 'conspiracy' by the extreme right. Fascist elements in Slovakia were in contact with Slovak émigrés, especially with the former quisling Foreign Minister, Durčanský. Prominent members of the Slovak Democrat Party were alleged to be implicated. The communist commissioners resigned, and claimed that their resignation must involve the fall of the Board of Commissioners as a whole. Though a communist, Husak, had been chairman of the Board, the majority of seats in it, a great majority of votes in the parliamentary elections in Slovakia, and consequently a majority of seats in the party-nominated Slovak National Council, were held by the Democrat Party. Therefore the communist argument seemed doubtful. It was, however, accepted by the Prague Premier, the communist Gottwald. The communists suggested a meeting of the People's Front of Slovakia (communists, democrats and two minor parties set up in 1946, the socialists and the Freedom Party). In order to create a communist majority in the Front, it was also suggested that the meeting be attended by representatives of the trade unions and the communist-controlled resistance organisations. The meeting settled nothing, and the issue was referred to the People's Front of the whole of Czechoslovakia, which was called to meet in Prague. Gottwald now used the same trick as the Slovak communists. Representatives of the communist-controlled trade unions and Czech Farmers' Association, but not of the non-communist Czech resisters and Sokols, were invited. The Czech People's Party, national socialists and Slovak democrats refused to attend the meeting, on the ground that the Front was a coalition of political parties, and other organisations had no business to come to its meetings. The deadlock did not, however, lead to a final breach. On 18 November a new Slovak Board of Commissioners was appointed. The Slovak democrats lost only one place, and kept two of those for which the communists had most clamoured—Food and Agriculture. The third disputed post—Justice—was given to a non-party man.

Thus the first round of the struggle had been a draw. During November the communists had a setback. At the congress of the Social Democrat Party, held in Brno, the section of the party which had reservations about collaboration with the communists proved the stronger. Fierlinger, who in September had made an agreement—without first consulting the party—for closer co-

operation with the communists, was replaced as chairman by the more independent Laušman. The party's view was that there should be equal co-operation with all parties belonging to the People's Front.

From the end of 1947 friction grew rapidly. The communist-controlled Ministry of Trade accused some leading Prague shops of hoarding textiles. It transpired that the shops had given full details of their stocks to the Ministry, whose experts had examined them, but forbidden them to sell them until new prices were fixed. As the prices had never been declared, the stocks remained unsold. But this did not prevent the Minister from closing the shops and accusing the owners of sabotage. The communists also proposed a 'tax on millionaires' to pay for the losses of the peasants in the severe drought of the preceding summer. This was opposed by the other parties as a piece of irresponsible demagoguery, which would not raise enough funds to compensate the peasants. Another problem was the pay of civil servants. The social democrat Minister of Food, Majer, proposed a rise in pay for all categories. This was opposed by the communist trade union leader Zápotocký. The communists had their own plans as to who should be purged from the civil service and who should have his pay increased. To support their views the communists summoned a congress in Prague of delegates of factory councils for 22 February. There was also perpetual friction in the cabinet on the policy of the communist Minister of Agriculture, D'uriš, who was agitating for a new land reform, and was using his department unashamedly for patronage to members of the party. He too decided to support his policy by a mass meeting in Prague. Delegates of the Farmers' Union, a communist-controlled organisation, were summoned for 29 February.

The issue on which the decisive crisis came was control of the police. New elections were due in the early summer. In the following months it was essential that the police should not interfere with civil liberties. The communist Minister of the Interior Nosek went merrily ahead with his packing of the police force. Several high police officials in Prague had just been dismissed and replaced by communists. Apart from this a battle had long been raging between Nosek and the national socialist Minister of Justice, Dr. Drtina, in connection with the dispatch of parcels containing bombs to three Ministers—Drtina himself, the national socialist vice-Premier Zenkl, and the Foreign Minister Masaryk. Investigations by the Ministry of Justice had shown that the

outrage had been planned by the Communist Party organisation in the town of Olomouc. A communist member of parliament, Jura-Sosnar, and a communist minister, Čepička, were involved. But the police, controlled by Nosek, delayed or refused action against the offenders; while the communist press hurled abuse at the investigators.

On 12 February 1948 a majority of the cabinet instructed Nosek to stop his packing of the police. Nosek ignored the instruction, and was backed by the communist Premier Gottwald. On 21 February the ministers belonging to the Czech People's, National Socialist and Slovak Democrat Parties resigned in protest. The social democrat ministers, who had taken part in the earlier cabinet resolution, did not resign.

The ministers' action was not well prepared. If they hoped for a constitutional solution of the crisis, they should have made sure of the social democrats and of President Beneš before they acted. If they had had both, they could constitutionally have demanded the formation of a new government based on a parliamentary majority and excluding the communists. But without the social democrats they were in the minority, and with the President undecided and isolated their prospects were poor. If on the other hand they expected that the communists would resort to unconstitutional methods, they should have made preparations for defence by force. If they had been what they were later accused of being—subversive conspirators—this is what they would have done. Certainly among the army officers and soldiers, and even in the police force, there were many who would have supported them if they had planned thoroughly. Their lack of preparation is the best proof that they were in fact law-abiding democrats—with all the weaknesses of such.

In fact the communists used both constitutional and unconstitutional means. President Beneš had rallied round his person all the patriotism of the Czech people. He enjoyed immense prestige. For three years he had unobtrusively but by no means ineffectively resisted communist pressure, especially in foreign policy and army affairs. But he was now a sick man. He was desperately anxious to avoid a second national disaster, and to avoid a quarrel with Russia, which he regarded as the main defence against the ultimate inevitable revival of Germany. In this he was typical of many of his compatriots. For the communists it was important to win over Beneš and use his prestige. They therefore used every possible persuasion.

But the communists did not rely only on sweet words. They armed detachments of factory workers under communist leaders and paraded them through the Prague streets. Communist toughs entered the ministries whose heads had resigned, and the offices of the three parties which they led. In the headquarters of the Social Democrat Party, Fierlinger's left wing took over, with communists gangs standing by to help if needed. The delegates to the factory council congress of 22 February were addressed by Gottwald, and passed resolutions condemning the resigning ministers, insisting that they should never be allowed to hold power again, and calling for a far more sweeping programme of nationalisation than that of 1945. In the capital and the provinces 'action committees' suddenly came into being. They consisted of communists and communist-sponsored stooges. They took over the duties of the people's committees, which had hitherto been composed of representatives of all parties. Nosek instructed all public officials to co-operate with the action committees.

President Beneš at first insisted that the new government must be based on the parties of the People's Front, led by their recognised leaders. He pleaded against the 'split of the nation into two quarrelling halves'. But the communists insisted that there could be no discussions with the old leaders. With typical bombast they declared that 'powerful popular manifestations have shown that our working people with absolute unanimity and indignation condemn the policy of these parties'. Meanwhile the radio and printing presses were firmly held by communists. The President was cut off from his people, and especially from his army commanders. The pro-communist Minister of Defence, General Svoboda, ordered his troops to remain neutral, and the communist-controlled Information Section of the General Staff was busy. The Western Powers were clearly unwilling to help with more than protests. On 25 February Beneš yielded. A new government was formed. The key posts were held by communists, left social democrats were well represented, and the other parties each had a 'representative' chosen not by themselves but by the communists. The trade union leader Zápotocky became vice-Premier. Professor Nějedly returned to the Ministry of Education.

Jan Masaryk remained Foreign Minister. He evidently hoped that he could protect some of his faithful followers from persecution. Perhaps he trusted to the native 'Schwejkism' of the Czechs to make the best of a cruel situation. But on 10 March his dead body was found in a courtyard of the Foreign Ministry.

The death of this great democrat, the last surviving male member of the family of the 'President-Liberator', whose extraordinary charm and goodness had made him hundreds of devoted friends all over the world, especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries, brought home to the Czech people and to world opinion the horror of Czechoslovakia's tragedy.

The communist victory was followed by a series of purges—of press, universities, civil service, and even sports clubs. The 'Central Action Committee of the People's Front', under Zápotocky, appointed to the leadership of the rumps of the non-communist parties individuals known to be loyal not to their own party but to the communists. Thus the fiction of a People's Front was preserved. In the summer Fierlinger led the rump Social Democrat Party into fusion with the communists.

The purged Parliament was dissolved in May, and new elections were held, on a joint list, with no opposition candidates. The official results were 90 per cent for the list in the Czech lands and 86 per cent in Slovakia. A new constitution, based on that of the U.S.S.R., had already been proclaimed on 8 May. On 6 June Dr. Beneš resigned the Presidency. His letter to Premier Gottwald made it clear that his reasons were political. He was succeeded by Gottwald, and Zápotocky became Premier. On 6 September Beneš died. His passing symbolised the end of Czechoslovak democracy. Despite a few surviving trappings of a party coalition, Czechoslovakia was in practice as tightly held in the communist vice as neighbour countries.

#### HUNGARY

The Provisional Government headed by General Miklos was formed in December 1944 in a country ruined by military operations and threatened by administrative anarchy. Many of the civil servants and gendarmes of the old regime served Szálasi.<sup>1</sup> Others simply fled before the advancing Russians. Behind the Soviet combat troops came the political experts of the N.K.V.D., accompanied by a number of Hungarian communists who had lived in exile in the U.S.S.R. Some were survivors of the 1919 Béla Kun regime, others had fled between the wars, others were 'politically re-educated' prisoners-of-war. The communists were soon in touch with underground organisers and with unorganised

<sup>1</sup> The members of the last Hungarian governments took refuge in American-occupied Germany, but were handed over to the new regime. Among the most prominent, Szálasi, Sztójay, Imrédy, Bárdossy, Szász and Reményi-Schneller were all executed during the winter of 1945-6.

sympathisers in the liberated towns. The communists were helped by the Soviet political authorities with transport and with the means of propaganda. Thus they were able to start their party machine with advantages. But as it was part of Soviet and communist policy all over Europe to create Popular Fronts, the communists were not content to build their own party: other parties also had to be organised, and a democratic coalition to be formed.

The Social Democrat Party had an organisation in the industrial centres of the provinces, and the Small Farmers' Party a larger but less organised body of supporters in both towns and villages. In the first months it is a curious paradox that the reconstitution of these parties was largely the work of the teams of communist agitators who travelled round in Red Army vehicles.<sup>1</sup> The general policy was everywhere to create Committees of National Liberation with representatives of four parties.

The fourth was the National Peasant Party, based on a group of radical intellectual experts on the peasant question, the so-called 'village explorers'. The communists intended to use this party as a counter-weight among the peasants to the more conservative Small Farmers' Party, to make of it in fact a rural branch of the Communist Party. But at first they were by no means successful.

The four-party committees were of course intended to play a part comparable to that of the soviets in Russian history. They were to be dominated by the communists, and were to supersede the old state administration. But here too the communists were unsuccessful. Though many local representatives of the three non-communist parties had in fact been selected by communists, they soon adopted the policy of their own parties. Many committees were of course dominated by the communists, and in all the communist influence was greater than it was among the people as a whole. But the communists were far from having complete control.

A provisional legislative body, the National Council, was formed. Its composition was decided by agreement between the leaders of the four parties. The three main parties had each rather

<sup>1</sup> The following account is based, apart from official Hungarian sources and personal conversations during my visits to Hungary in 1946 and 1947, on two books by exiles—Ferenc Nagy, *The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain*, and Sulyok, *Zwei Nächte ohne Tag*. These I consider a good source when dealing with events in which the authors were personally involved, but I do not necessarily accept all their explanations or conclusions.

more than a quarter of the seats, and the national peasants rather less than a quarter. Each party then chose the delegates who would fill these seats.

The Ministry of the Interior was given to Erdei, of the National Peasant Party. He was one of the 'village explorer' writers, but stood much nearer to the communists than his party colleagues did. Thus under his titular leadership the Ministry soon became a communist preserve. The political and economic sections of the police were fairly thoroughly controlled by the communists. In the lower ranks of the ordinary police communist infiltration was much slower but steady.

The Communist Party held the Ministry of Agriculture. Land reform was a vital issue in Hungary. The Minister, Imre Nagy, had to make sure that the goodwill and patronage among the peasants which execution of land reform must create should go to the Communist Party. The reform was decreed in March 1945 and was hurriedly carried out in the liberated provinces.

The reorganisation of trade unions was also largely controlled by the communists. A former Budapest tramworkers' leader, Stephen Kossa, who had been sent with a penal labour battalion to the Russian front, captured by the Red Army and 'politically educated' at a Soviet training centre, became the boss of the movement. Certain categories of workers—for instance employees of state munitions factories and railwaymen—had not been allowed to form unions under the old regime. In the unions now created for the first time, communists were given the key posts. In the old unions the veteran social democrat leaders could not be excluded, but Kossa used his position wherever possible to weaken their influence. The trade unions were given representation on Committees of National Liberation and on provisional city councils, thus strengthening the communists' position.

This was reinforced by the fact that the new leader of the Social Democrat Party, Árpád Szakasits, collaborated unquestioningly with the communists. When the old leader, Charles Peyer, came back from Mauthausen concentration camp, he was unable to re-assert his authority in the party. The dependence of the social democrats on the communists was illustrated by an incident in the summer of 1945. In the village of Gyömrő, communist policemen had arrested and shot twenty-six people without trial, and in the town of Kecskemét atrocities had been committed by a local police chief who was also a communist. The social democrat Minister of Justice, Valentiny, proposed that in any case where the

police failed to take action against policemen guilty of crimes, the Ministry of Justice should be empowered to set up a commission of investigation. This proposal was carried at the cabinet, but Szakasits, at the request of the communists, forced Agostini to resign his post. The proposal was never carried out.

Despite frequent acts of lawlessness, the country was settling down by the autumn of 1945. Parliamentary elections were due. As a result of communist pressure it was decided first to hold municipal elections in Budapest. The social democrats agreed to put up candidates on a joint list with the communists, against the Small Farmers' Party. So certain were the two parties that the working-class majority of the capital would vote for them that they went out of their way to ensure a free and secret poll. The result was 51 per cent for the Small Farmers' Party. This seems to have been principally a vote against the Russians, from whom all sections of the population had suffered terribly in and immediately after the siege. After this, Marshal Voroshilov, head of the Control Commission, proposed to the small farmers' leaders that the forthcoming parliamentary election should be held on a common list of the four government parties. The share of seats for each party should be decided beforehand. He suggested to the small farmers' leaders first 40 per cent, then 45 per cent, then 47½ per cent. He argued that it would be wrong to 'make the workers' parties feel that they are entering the contest as a disproportionately small minority', by giving the small farmers more than this. But feeling in the party was strongly against a common list. Ferenc Nagy, its representative at inter-party conferences, felt obliged to refer the question to the central executive committee of the party. It came out strongly for a competitive election, and Voroshilov at last agreed, but on the understanding that whatever the results of the election, the coalition of four parties should continue. The voting was in fact free, and resulted in 57 per cent for the small farmers, 17 per cent each for socialists and communists, and 7 per cent for national peasants.

For the next year and a half the chief aim of communist and soviet policy in Hungary was to break the Small Farmers' Party, the chief obstacle to the sovietisation of Hungary.

Tildy, the small farmers' leader, became Prime Minister for the next months. Since 1918 Hungary had been a 'kingdom without a king'. It was felt necessary to put an end to this paradox by proclaiming a republic. This was voted in January 1946 against only one opposing vote, from the Legitimist Catholic nun, Miss

Margaret Slachta. The first President of the Republic was Tildy, and his place as Premier was taken by Ferenc Nagy.<sup>1</sup>

Much more important than this was the dispute on the Ministry of the Interior. When the Tildy government was formed the Small Farmers' Party had claimed it as the strongest party, and it had been agreed that one of their most energetic and popular members, Béla Kovács, should be minister. But some days later the communist leader Matthias Rákosi, declared that if a communist was not nominated to the Ministry of the Interior, his party would not join the government. Knowing that the Soviet authorities would insist on a coalition government, and would consider the coalition 'unrepresentative' without the Communist Party, the small farmers yielded. The former Minister of Agriculture, Imre Nagy, became Minister of the Interior. The communist hold over the police became tighter.

It was helped by the purge of the bureaucracy. Everyone was agreed that Hungary, reduced once more to her pre-1938 frontiers, had too many civil servants: the only question was, who was to go? The separate ministries were to draw up so-called 'B-lists' of redundant civil servants. The lists were to be made by a three-man commission. One member was to be appointed by the Prime Minister, one by the minister of the department concerned, and one by the trade unions. The purge was conducted on grounds of political opinions rather than efficiency, and as the communists were more systematic and better informed on political opinions of employees than were the small farmers they derived more advantage from the process.

In March 1946 occurred the first purge in the Small Farmers' Party. One of its leaders, Sulyok, a man of proved democratic convictions, belonging rather to the left than the right wing of the party, incurred the wrath of the Soviet authorities and of the Communist Party by strongly nationalist speeches. Sulyok especially attacked the treatment by the Slovaks of their Hungarian minority. The communists, looking for an opportunity to weaken the small farmer majority in parliament, singled out Sulyok for attack as a chauvinist and reactionary. He was denounced in the press, and by speakers at communist-led workers' street demonstrations. The Small Farmers' leaders decided on 12 March to accept the communist demand for the expulsion of

<sup>1</sup> Nagy (in English 'big') is a common Hungarian name. It is important here to distinguish between Ferenc Nagy, member of the Small Farmers Party and Premier 1946-7, and Imre Nagy, member of the Communist Party and Minister first of Agriculture and then of Interior in 1945-6.

Sulyok and twenty-one other members of parliament from the party. They kept their seats in parliament.

Sulyok at once formed a separate parliamentary group of the majority of those expelled, and approached the Soviet authorities for permission to form a new party, in opposition to the government, to be called the Freedom Party. In July permission was granted, withdrawn a few days later after a speech by Sulyok in parliament in favour of a United States of Europe, and finally granted in October.<sup>1</sup> The party had a brief and tumultuous history. Its first public meeting was held in Budapest on 24 November. Though the only means of announcing it beforehand had been posters, a crowd of many thousands attended. On 5 January 1947 another great meeting was held in Szeged. But the party was attracting too much attention, and the communists decided to render it powerless. Gangs of toughs were sent to break up meetings, interrupt speeches, and shout provocative slogans justifying the intervention of the police. When Sulyok spoke at a meeting of Catholic Action in Kiskunfélegyháza on 2 March toughs tried to attack him, and he narrowly escaped. On 23 March a meeting of the party at Hódmezővásárhely was broken up by communist gangs. Repeated requests for permission to publish a newspaper led to its appearance on 15 March 1947. It was called *Holnap* (To-morrow). It had a large and growing circulation (66,000 by the tenth number), but it lasted less than two weeks. Sulyok was so rash as to take up the cause of the industrial workers. He pointed out that they were wretchedly paid, and contrasted their lot with that of the bosses of the trade unions and of the two 'workers' parties', who led the lives of wealthy bourgeois. There was enough truth in this demagoguery to infuriate the communists. They could not permit a non-Marxist to win working-class support. They therefore decided to suppress the newspaper. On 28 March, on the orders of the trade union leader Kossa, the printers 'refused to print the reactionary calumnies' of Sulyok, and the paper came to an end.

Soviet and Hungarian communist pressure on the Nagy government was well co-ordinated. In the summer of 1946 some Red Army men were shot in the town of Gyöngyös by a Hungarian youth, whose mother had been raped by Russians. This youth had a friend who worked in the central office of the Small Farmers' Party, and knew two members of parliament of the party. One of them had once given him a few revolvers and two hand-

<sup>1</sup> See Sulyok, *Zwei Nächte ohne Tag*.

grenades, part of a small store of arms which had been created to protect the party headquarters in the lawless days after the liberation of Budapest. About the same time another boy had killed two Russian officers in a Budapest street. He was alleged to have been friendly with a Catholic priest. On the ground of these crimes the Soviet authorities demanded the dissolution of the Catholic youth organisation and the scouts, the removal of four county prefects, and the arrest of the two 'implicated' small farmer members of parliament. Nagy was able to defend the members of parliament, but had to yield on the other points.

Soon after this, disorders occurred in the town of Miskolc. A crowd of workers incited by a communist attacked a mill owned by Jewish brothers, one of whom died of injuries. When some of the mob were arrested, the workers attacked the gaol, freed the murderers, murdered a Jewish policeman, and set free some fascists from a nearby internment camp. There was also an anti-Jewish pogrom at Kunmadaras. Both incidents were the work of fascist toughs who had joined the Communist Party. But the trial was so arranged as to give the murderers light sentences and to condemn to death two innocent small farmer supporters. These were eventually acquitted by a court of appeal.

Soviet intervention at this time included a veto on two government bills, to create a peasant organisation corresponding to the trade unions for industrial workers, and to reduce or abolish sentences on a number of minor political offenders. The Soviet military command also ordered the Minister of War to increase the numbers of the frontier guards and to place them under a certain Colonel Pálffi-Osterreicher, a communist and the head of the political espionage section of the General Staff. Soviet troops also arrested several leaders of the Hungarian monarchists, whom they seemed to regard as serious enemies. The Soviet commander, General Sviridov, also intervened in appointments to ministries. The Minister of Education, Keresztury, of the National Peasant Party, had annoyed the communists by the way he conducted the purge of officials in his ministry. They therefore forced the National Peasant Party's leader Veres to make him resign. They had their own candidate for his successor. Later in the autumn some cabinet posts held by the Small Farmers' Party fell vacant, and Sviridov recommended to Nagy certain of his own party who had become secret agents of the communists.

The crisis which broke the Small Farmers' Party began in December 1945. Pálffi-Österreicher's political section of the army

arrested a group of 'conspirators', including a Foreign Office official Szentiványi, a Major Szentmiklossi, a former member of parliament for the M.E.P. named Donáth, and a leading member of the Small Farmers' Party, Bálint Arany. These men had formed an organisation called the Hungarian Community. They considered everything which had happened in Hungary since the German occupation of March 1944 illegal, and aimed at a return to the constitutional past. The communists and the Soviet command decided to use this parlour-plot to implicate the whole Small Farmers' Party. The arrested men were kept in the power of Pálffi-Österreicher. Premier Nagy ordered the War Minister, Bárta, a member of his party, personally to interrogate the accused. Pálffi-Österreicher, Bárta's subordinate, refused to let him see them on the ground that the Soviet general Sviridov had forbidden it. Sviridov denied that he had said this, but supported Pálffi-Österreicher against the Premier. Neither Bárta nor any other Small Farmers' representative could visit the accused.

After the accused had been 'worked on' by the communists of the political section of the army and of the civil Political Police (forming part of the communist-controlled Ministry of the Interior and under the immediate command of the Moscow-trained communist Gabriel Péter), they made 'confessions' implicating leading members of the Small Farmers' Party. The Minister of Reconstruction, Mistéth, had known them and admitted that he had belonged to the Hungarian Community. The arrested men also implicated the small farmer members of parliament Alexander Kis, Jaczkó and Saláta. The Soviet authorities now repeated their charges against the two members of parliament 'involved' in the Gyöngyös shooting of Red Army men, Gyulai and Rácz.

The main argument of communist propaganda against the Small Farmers' Party for the last year had been that it provided a refuge for fascists and for reactionary urban middle-class elements. The communists claimed to respect the Hungarian peasants. They argued that the peasants were essentially democratic, and in so far as the party represented them it was a democratic party. The peasant members of parliament, they suggested, should take control of the party and insist on the removal of the bourgeois elements. There was some truth in this communist view of the party. But it is significant that in this decisive 'conspiracy crisis' it was precisely the peasant members of parliament whom the communists attacked. They were especially keen to destroy

the Peasant League, which Ferenc Nagy had revived after the defeat of the Germans. They wished to dissolve it and replace it by two organisations which they themselves controlled, the Association of Agricultural Workers and Small Landowners, and the Association of New Landowners. Alexander Kis and Horváth, two members of parliament, who led the League, were accused. The climax of the crisis came with the implication of Béla Kovács, general secretary of the party, himself a peasant.

Throughout the crisis Tildy urged the Small Farmers' Party to accept each successive demand by the communist Minister of the Interior Rajk. The communist hold over Tildy was due partly to his praise of Horthy in the pre-war days and partly to some scandals connected with his family. Under their pressure he systematically betrayed his party. Premier Nagy tried from time to time to resist. He was not strong enough to save his friends, but his reluctance was sufficiently obvious to convince the communists that he was not a 'safe' occupant of the premiership. The police first requested the suspension of the parliamentary immunity of members Jaczkó and Saláta. When this was granted Jaczkó was arrested but Saláta fled the country. Some days later the suspension of the immunity of six more members was requested. They themselves agreed to this, and five of them were then arrested. Then came the turn of Béla Kovács.

By now the parliamentary group of the Small Farmers' Party was seething with indignation. Especially the peasant members, realising that the destruction of the party and the enslavement of the peasantry were the communists' aims, refused to surrender Kovács. A peasant member, Stephen Kovács<sup>1</sup> in a moving speech proposed that a parliamentary committee be appointed to investigate the charges against Béla Kovács and the arrested members. This committee would have taken the conduct of the whole affair out of the hands of the communist police and would have revealed all the methods used to extort confessions. The communists in parliament violently opposed the plan, calling Stephen Kovács an agent of clerical reaction conspiring against democracy. Tildy pressed the party to abandon the plan, and was supported by Ferenc Nagy. Béla Kovács now resigned the general secretaryship of the party and the editorship of the party newspaper *Kis Újság*.

<sup>1</sup> Kovács (in English 'Smith') is a very common Hungarian name. Here we must distinguish between Béla Kovács, secretary general of the Small Farmers Party; Imre Kovács, sociologist and secretary of the National Peasant Party; Stephen Kovács, member of parliament for the Small Farmers Party; and I. Kovács, member of parliament for the Communist Party (see p. 200 below).

But this was not enough for the communists. Demonstrations of communist-led workers clamoured in front of parliament building for 'death to Kovács'. He agreed with Nagy that he should visit police headquarters and answer questions, but should not surrender his parliamentary immunity. But by now the member of parliament Gyulai, arrested for the Gyöngyös affair, had 'confessed' that Kovács had organised espionage, on behalf of a foreign power, against the Soviet army. Thus the Soviet authorities had a pretext for intervention. On 26 February 1947, the second day of Kovács' questioning, Soviet soldiers came to the headquarters and there arrested Kovács, taking him first to his home and then to an unknown destination. After this the unfortunate man was not seen alive again except by his captors. It was learned months later that he had died in captivity. Before he died, however, he was stated to have incriminated his intimate friend Ferenc Nagy.

The unfortunate Nagy remained Premier, horrified by the fate of Kovács but unable to help him, torn between his desire to resign and a pathetic belief that he could still save something by staying at his post, that the impending evacuation by Soviet troops of Hungarian territory, in accordance with the peace treaties, would change the situation. The American and British governments sent notes of protest on the Kovács case, an act of Soviet intervention on which they, though members of the Allied Control Commission set up under the armistice, had not been consulted. The notes were ignored. On 11 March the government was reshuffled. Three nominal members of the Small Farmers' Party who were tools of the communists—Ortutay, Mihályfi and Dinnyés—became Ministers of Education, Information and Defence. In May Nagy went on a holiday to Switzerland. While he was away the 'revelations' of Kovács about him were produced. His infant son was used by the communists as a hostage to make him resign. He was succeeded as Premier by the stooge Dinnyés. The Small Farmers' Party had been broken.

The National Peasant Party now underwent a purge. Its secretary Imre Kovács, perhaps the most eminent and one of the most radical of the 'village explorers', had been a personal friend of Béla Kovács. He resigned his post, and in the summer escaped abroad. For the time being the party was led by Peter Veres, also a writer and an agricultural labourer by origin. He was prepared to collaborate with the communists, but never won their confidence. He was too nationalist, and his views, though fiercely

revolutionary, were far from orthodox Marxism. They smelt of peasant anarchism. In 1948 Veres was quietly pushed out of the leadership, and all power in the party was taken by the crypto-communist Erdei. Thus the National Peasant Party by 1948 became what the communists had intended it to be, what for a time the integrity of some of its intellectual leaders had prevented it from being, the rural branch of the Communist Party.

In the summer of 1947 new elections were prepared. Communists, social democrats, national peasants and the rump of the Small Farmers' Party went to the polls on separate lists. The new electoral law restricted the franchise. All who had been 'condemned for crimes against the Republic or democracy' were disqualified. This might be used against any of the very large number of people who had been temporarily interned by the police since 1945. The ban extended to relatives of such persons 'up to the degree of cousin' who had resided in the same house with them. The voting age was also raised from 21 to 22. During the electoral campaign the real attitude of the communists to the former leaders of the Small Farmers' Party was revealed with surprising frankness. In a speech in Szolnok on 5 June the communist member of parliament I. Kovács said that 'the clique around Nagy intended to evict the Communist Party from the government once the Red Army had withdrawn'. That is to say, if the leaders of a party possessing an absolute majority in a freely elected parliament decide that they will, at some unspecified date in the future, use their majority to end a coalition and form a government by themselves, they are committing a 'treasonable conspiracy' against democracy.

The existing opposition party of Sulyok continued to suffer attacks by bands of communist hooligans. In July Sulyok asked the Minister of the Interior, Rajk, to guarantee order at his meetings. He was told that the police could not be sure of its ability to control the 'just anger of the people against the enemies of democracy'. Sulyok therefore decided to dissolve his party, formally motivating the action by the desire not to expose his followers to persecution. Three other opposition parties were authorised. The Independence Party, led by a former Under-Secretary of Justice, Zoltán Pfeiffer, who had been expelled from the Small Farmers' Party at communist request, was conservative and nationalist. The Democratic People's Party led by Stephen Baránkovics was a progressive Catholic Party, modelled on the French M.R.P. The third party was led by a Catholic priest,

Stephen Balogh, who had since 1944 been prominent in the Small Farmers' Party. As Secretary to the Premier's office, Balogh had for a long time enjoyed the goodwill of both the communists and the Soviet authorities. He had succeeded Béla Kovács as general secretary of the Small Farmers' Party. A gifted intriguer, a jovial hedonist and a mountain of a man, he had earned the distrust of all in turn. His new party seemed designed only to split the opposition ranks.

The elections were held on 31 August 1947. In comparison with those of November 1945 they were a fraud, but in comparison with those in most neighbouring countries they were free. The communists won the largest number of votes (22 per cent). Their success was largely due to groups of voters armed with many ballot papers who travelled round the country in lorries, voting many times over. Of their allies the socialists had 15 per cent, rump small farmers 14 per cent, and National Peasant Party 9 per cent. The opposition had 35 per cent. (Pfeiffer 14 per cent, Barankovics 16 per cent and Balogh 5 per cent.) In the new government Dinnyes remained Premier. A campaign soon started against Pfeiffer. Communist vice-Premier Rákosi declared that his reactionary party was too heavy a burden for the young Hungarian democracy to bear. It was dissolved in the autumn, and Pfeiffer himself fled to Austria. The party of Barámkovics lasted until the end of 1948. It voted against the government in June 1948, when Catholic schools were nationalised. The conflict with the Catholic Church reached its climax in December 1948 when Cardinal Mindszenty was arrested. At the same time Barámkovics dissolved his party and escaped abroad. Balogh remained in nominal opposition, but in fact supported the government. In 1949 he joined the government electoral block.

The only political party of importance which still in 1948 had some semblance of independence were the social democrats. Under the complaisant Szakasits they had on all important issues supported the communists. This policy was unpopular with many socialists. In the autumn of 1946 the veteran party leader Charles Peyer wrote a long memorandum in which he denounced communist methods and policy, and the subservience of Szakasits to it. But Peyer was outvoted, and had to leave the party. He formed a separate group of his own for a time, but then fled the country. But though the party's right wing was crushed, there were still prominent socialists who represented what may be called a 'centre'. In 1948 communist pressure for fusion of the two

'workers' parties' grew. All who opposed fusion were dubbed right-wing socialists. The communists pressed for their expulsion from the Social Democrat Party. The two most prominent representatives of this tendency were the Minister of Industry, Antal Bán, and the vice-chairman of parliament, Miss Anna Kéthly. At the end of February they and a number of less known members were expelled, and a special party congress decided for fusion. The ceremony took place at a congress of both parties held on 12-14 June. The new party was named Hungarian Workers' Party. In fact the Communist Party had simply swallowed up the socialists.

Szakasits received his reward in August. The wretched Tildy had reached the limit of his usefulness. His son-in-law was implicated in an 'espionage plot' and later executed. Tildy resigned, and his place was taken by Szakasits. In the government reshuffle which resulted, two more communists, Farkas and Kossa, became Ministers of War and Industry. Rajk became Minister of Foreign Affairs,<sup>1</sup> and yet another communist, Kádár, took over the Interior. In December the rump small farmer Minister of Finance, Nyarádi, broke with his government while on a mission abroad, and this brought the fall of Dinnyés. He was succeeded as Premier by the still more subservient rump small farmer Dóbi.

By the end of 1948 communist domination of Hungary was complete. In April 1949 parliament was dissolved and elections held for a new assembly whose task would be to proclaim a new constitution of the Soviet type. The government list, which now included Balogh's party, received the expected majority of over 90 per cent. There were no opposition candidates.

#### RUMANIA

The first cabinet of General Sănătescu, composed of generals, resigned on 5 November 1944 as a result of a protest from the Soviet General Vinogradov on alleged non-fulfilment of the armistice terms. The new government was still headed by Sănătescu, but was composed of politicians. It contained four national peasants, four liberals, three socialists and one communist. The party leaders continued to be ministers without portfolio. This new government passed some long overdue political measures. In particular it decided to arrest former Iron Guardists, and repealed all anti-Jewish legislation. It also decided to take action to expel

<sup>1</sup> For the subsequent disgrace of Rajk, see below, pp. 315-16.

the German minority from Transylvania. The government fell as a result of disputes about the Ministry of the Interior, held by the national peasant Penescu. He was bitterly attacked by the communists as a protector of fascists. Sănătescu was replaced as Premier by General Rădescu. This elderly officer had been well known for his anti-German attitude during the war, and had been for a time interned. He enjoyed the confidence of the Soviet command. They had pressed for his appointment as Chief of General Staff. The main changes in the new cabinet were that Rădescu himself took over the Ministry of the Interior and that the ministries without portfolio were abolished.

During these months public order was in a curious condition. In Moldavia and southern Bukovina the old officials had fled before the Red Army's advance. There had also been a panic flight of the greater part of the large landowning and bourgeois class. Consequently not only had the old administration broken down, but the old political parties—national peasants and liberals—had lost what little organisation they had been able to retain under the dictatorships of Carol II and Antonescu. The Russian authorities had to ensure order, and it was they who chose its Rumanian exponents. These were for the most part communists or persons willing to obey communist orders. They included a considerable proportion of Jews, some of Bessarabian origin. At the other end of the country, in northern Transylvania, there was friction between representatives of the Rumanian 'historic parties'—especially national peasants—and the communists. The latter were for the most part Hungarians. This is explained by the fact that the towns, where communism made some appeal to the workers, were Hungarian rather than Rumanian in population, and that the large Jewish element had always been more Hungarian in sympathy than Rumanian. Fighting broke out between so-called 'Maniu Guards' of Rumanian nationalists and Hungarians. Claiming not unreasonably that this endangered security behind the front, the Soviet military command formally took over responsibility for administration, and refused to let the representatives of the Rumanian government enter the province.

It was only in Wallachia and southern Transylvania that the government's writ ran. Here the old bureaucracy which had served Carol II and Antonescu was still in charge when King Michael brought Rumania out of the war. There is no doubt that many of the old officials had fascist sympathies, and that many were hated by the people for their corrupt and brutal behaviour

in the past. A purge was urgently needed. But the purge became in fact a struggle between the parties, each wishing to replace those dismissed with its own supporters and to keep in their jobs those who were willing to serve it. The communists had two great advantages: they were supported by the Soviet authorities, and they were able to point to the mistakes of the other parties when they had been in power in the past, but themselves, having never been in power, were not open to similar attack. In the first months they won some genuine support from the poor and oppressed. In the cities they appealed not only to workers but to small shopkeepers and lower officials, who suffered great economic hardship. In the countryside the Ploughmen's Front made some genuine progress at the expense of the National Peasant Party.

This organisation, founded in 1934 in the south Transylvanian town of Deva, had never before had more than local importance. But it was a genuine movement of radical peasants, actually managed by the peasants themselves with the advice of some intellectuals, including the former minister Dr. Petru Groza. The Front now spread outside the small area where it had previously existed. Its spokesmen in the villages had considerable success when they stressed the past failures of the National Peasant Party, its tendency to help only the richer peasants' interests, and its domination by non-peasants. But success damaged the Front. As it spread to new regions, it became dependent on people who knew nothing of its former aims and struggles. It tended to rally only the village malcontents, willing to follow any demagogic slogan, the same people who earlier had formed the rural support of the Iron Guard. For its organisation it depended on communists. Soon its cadres consisted mainly of communists, and its leadership was filled with avowed or concealed communists, many of whom were not only not peasants, but had little interest in peasants. It became, and was generally regarded as, the rural branch of the Communist Party.<sup>1</sup>

Both directly through its own branches and indirectly through the Ploughmen's Front, the Communist Party stirred up disorder

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat romanticised history of the Ploughman's Front, see Micle, *Răscoala pământului*. Communist penetration of the Front was so thorough that the genuine peasants were soon pushed aside. Romulus Zăroni, nominal Minister of Agriculture in the first Groza cabinet, and the peasant leaders Moga and Belea, provided for a time a little picturesque colour. When they had served their purpose, their communist masters kicked them out. For these men, who had struggled and suffered for their own idea of peasant democracy and social justice, it was a bitter tragedy. But Groza, who had once shared their hopes and struggle, made no effort to protect them.

wherever it could. In support of communist demands for the purge of particular officials who had incurred their wrath, communist-led mobs attacked public offices or led threatening street demonstrations. When the authorities tried to act against them, the Soviet command protested that the government was 'suppressing the popular will' or 'protecting fascists'. The action of the Communist Party and the Soviet command were well co-ordinated. General Rădescu soon found himself in conflict with both. The communists attacked him as a reactionary. Though their own attitude to the purge of the bureaucracy was as opportunist as that of the other parties, they represented themselves as fighting gallantly to cleanse the body politic of the fascist poison, sabotaged by the other parties who protected the enemy.<sup>1</sup> Though themselves willing to admit former Iron Guardists to their ranks, they raised a storm when the other parties did the same. They also pressed for an immediate land reform. Rădescu held that it should be postponed until the soldiers came back from the war, so that they should not be deprived of their share. The communists treated this as a dishonest attempt to gain time and prevent the reform. Especially they attacked him because he held the Ministry of the Interior. Within the Ministry, one of the under-secretaries, the communist Georgescu, undermined his authority and gave orders to his own supporters contrary to those of the Minister. When Rădescu ordered him to resign, he refused.

The crisis came in February 1945. Rădescu, unable to express himself in the censored press, made fierce attacks on the communists at public meetings. The Malaxa metallurgical works in Bucarest was the scene of a bloody battle between national peasant and communist workers. Many of the latter had been brought to the works from outside in lorries, and some were armed. The Malaxa works had been before the war an Iron Guardist stronghold, which gave the communists a chance to accuse the government of encouraging fascists to attack 'democratic workers'. There were probably in fact quite as many former Guardists among the communist contingent in this fight as among their opponents. On 24 February the communists organised a mass demonstration on the Palace Square. There was some shooting. The communists blamed the police, Rădescu the communists. The same day Rădescu made a bitter broadcast, calling

<sup>1</sup> Marshal Antonescu, Professor Mihai Antonescu and General Vasiliu, who had been taken to the Soviet Union after August 1944, were handed over to the Rumanian authorities in April 1945. Their trial took place from 6 to 17 May, and they were executed on 1 June 1945.

the communist leaders Anna Pauker and Vasile Luca 'foreigners without God or nation' and 'horrible hyenas'.<sup>1</sup>

At this point the Soviet government directly intervened. It seems that the Soviet command genuinely feared treachery in the Rumanian army and civil service. At this time things were not going well for the Red Army in Hungary, and Rumania was the immediate rear of the front, through which army supplies had to pass. It would indeed not be surprising if in a general staff which had been brought up to hate Russia and had long collaborated with the German army, there were pro-Germans. It is possible that the Russians had proof of this. If so, they did not deign to inform their allies of it. Soviet troops simply occupied the Rumanian army headquarters and disarmed Rumanian troops in the capital. Vyshinski arrived in Bucarest. The Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister ordered King Michael to appoint a government of the 'National Democratic Front'. This was a bloc led by the Communist Party, and included the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, a group of liberals led by Tătărescu,<sup>2</sup> and the Ploughmen's Front. The King yielded, and on 6 March formed a government under the Premiership of Groza. The communists held the ministries of the Interior (Georgescu) and Justice (Pătrășcanu). Tătărescu became Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

To strengthen the Groza government, the Soviet authorities on 9 March returned north Transylvania to Rumanian administration. This gesture was officially justified on the grounds that the new government could be trusted not to allow chauvinist persecution of Hungarians and consequent disorder in the rear of the Red Army. In view of the known opinions of both Groza and the communists on treatment of the Hungarian minority, there was some justification for the argument. On 20 March the government introduced the promised land reform. The purge of the administration was carried on in such a manner as to ensure control by the Communist Party, both through its own supporters and through those who from sympathy or fear could be counted on to follow its policy and orders.

The circumstances in which Groza was put in power enraged

<sup>1</sup> Anna Pauker was a Jewess and Vasile Luca a Hungarian from the Székely country in Transylvania. The most striking detail is the parallel between the ethnic origin of Codreanu, the leader of the Iron Guard, executed in 1938, and Bodnăras, the organiser of the Communist Party's military and police formations. Both the fascist tough and the communist tough, both the Rumanian super-patriot of the right and the Rumanian super-patriot 'anti-imperialist fighter' of the left, had a Ukrainian father and a German mother.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 26.

the British and American governments. In spite of the obligation under the Yalta declaration to consult the Allied Powers, the Soviet government had taken unilateral action. The Soviet authorities were consistently unfriendly, even offensive, to their colleagues on the Control Commission. Thus the British and Americans inevitably grew more hostile to the pro-Soviet elements in Rumania and more friendly to the opposition. The conflict between the Groza government and the oppositional 'historic parties' became an international issue.

The Potsdam declaration of August 1945 spoke of preparation of diplomatic relations with the countries formerly allied to Germany. The Soviet government at once established diplomatic relations with the Groza government, but the Western Powers did not. King Michael was encouraged by this to ask Groza to resign and to write a letter to the three governments, asking for advice on the broadening of his government 'in the spirit of Potsdam'. The Soviet government replied that it had already recognised the Groza government. The king retired to his mountain residence at Sinaia and refused to sign decrees. The government ignored him and carried on as before. In order to increase Groza's prestige the Soviet government invited him to Moscow to meet Stalin. Meanwhile the opposition placed their faith in Allied intervention on their behalf. On the king's birthday, 8 November, they staged a demonstration on the Palace Square in which they ostentatiously cheered America and Britain. There were clashes with communists, and some casualties. In December 1945, at the meeting of the three Foreign Ministers in Moscow, it was decided that a Three Power Commission<sup>1</sup> would be formed to give King Michael advice on broadening his government. It should take in one member each of the National Peasant Party and the Liberal Party, who must be truly representative of their parties and 'suitable' and willing to 'work loyally with the government'. After some discussion the Commission agreed on Emil Hațieganu (national peasant) and Mihail Râmniceanu (liberal). The new government took office on 7 January 1946, and American and British recognition was granted on 4 February.

The change was of no importance. The two new ministers were not consulted by their colleagues and had absolutely no power. In the country, supporters of both parties were intimidated or persecuted. The two parties' newspapers were printed in the capital,

<sup>1</sup> The Commission consisted of Vyshinski and the British and American ambassadors in Moscow, Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr and Mr. Averill Harriman.

and could be bought there in small numbers. Outside the capital distribution was almost impossible. Newsboys selling them were liable to be assaulted and copies burned or torn in pieces. Public meetings of either party were broken up by lorry-loads of armed communist toughs. Speakers sent from the towns to make propaganda in the villages were attacked on their return and savagely beaten by communist bands. In August 1946 the general secretary of the National Peasant Party, Penescu, was wounded when trying to attend a meeting in the town of Pitești, and his secretary was killed. A similar incident took place at Alba Iulia, where Mr. Ionel Pop, a nephew of the party leader Maniu, was injured. In all such cases the police refused protection.

The new electoral law made registration of voters difficult. In practice it was so administered by the authorities as to give the vote at once to all reliable communists and sympathisers, but to delay or prevent registration of 'unreliable' persons. The elections were held on 19 November 1946. Previous protests by the Western Powers were ignored by the Rumanian government on the ground that if the Soviet government did not support them they were not official Three Power actions but unjustifiable intervention in Rumania's internal affairs. Independent observers at the elections considered that they were conducted in an atmosphere of intimidation, and that results were falsified. The official results were 348 seats for the government bloc, 32 for the National Peasant Party, 3 for the Liberals and 29 for the Hungarian Popular Union (a communist-dominated party of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania which had not officially joined the government electoral bloc but in fact supported it).

During 1947 the opposition parties remained in the same semi-legal semi-repressed condition. In June a group of National Peasant Party leaders, including Mihalache, the former chairman of the party, were arrested as they prepared to leave Rumania by air. Some days later Maniu was arrested, and the National Peasant Party was formally banned. The trial of the leaders on a charge of conspiracy began in October. From the evidence given it would seem that there was some truth in some of the charges. American officers had made plans for subversive action with some members of the National Peasant Party, who had passed some information to them. The plans were childish and the information poor: neither seriously threatened the government. There was no evidence that Maniu was involved in any of the plans, and it seemed probable that among the plotters and among the organ-

isers of the escape by air there were agents provocateurs of the government. Maniu and Mihalache were sentenced to solitary confinement for life. It was a terrible end to the career of the great Transylvanian patriot, who despite all his faults and hesitations in past years was still regarded by the majority of his country-men as the greatest living Rumanian.

The Social Democrat Party for a year had supported the Groza government, and formed part of the National Democratic Front. The most prominent party leader, Titel Petrescu, at a conference of the party in December 1945 had had a majority for independent action and loose co-operation with the communists in an United Workers' Front. But communist pressure to join the single electoral list increased. The Social Democrat Party's congress, held in March 1946, however, voted for membership of the government electoral bloc. Petrescu's followers claimed that many of the delegates had been irregularly elected and that the congress hall was packed with communist agents. Petrescu and his loyal supporters left the party. The 'collaborationist' wing of the party, led by Voitec and Rădăceanu, was rewarded with 81 seats in the parliament elected in November 1946—slightly more than any other party of the government bloc. Within the party opinions continued to be divided. Some were for co-operation with the communists as an independent organisation, some supported fusion. The first group believed that by remaining inside the government but independent they could exert some influence in favour of political freedom. The party had in fact gained ground. The revulsion of feeling against Russia and against communist methods had brought an influx of workers into its ranks. It was also supported by public officials and other non-working-class elements who, being practically forced to join some governmental party, found the socialists by far the least of the evils. Thus both political principle and party advantage supported independence. In the autumn of 1947, however, communist pressure for fusion increased. At a congress held in November fusion was accepted. The new party was named the United Workers' Party. The social democrat leaders were made members of the executive committee, but all the power was in communist hands. Titel Petrescu's oppositional socialist party was dissolved. He himself was arrested in May 1948.

The other governmental group which had remnants of independence was Tătărescu's Liberal Party. Tătărescu had grown steadily more discontented with the government's economic

policy. In May 1947 in a memorandum to his cabinet colleagues he had criticised police repression and the conduct of industry, and suggested that foreign credits were needed. The communists blamed Tătărescu for the inflation which grew during the early summer. One of his supporters was Minister of Finance, and introduced the currency reform in August. When this did not prove successful, the communists threw the blame on his group. They were also accused of pursuing, through the officials of the ministries they controlled, a policy of nationalist discrimination against the Hungarians. When the Maniu trial revealed that several Foreign Ministry officials were involved in anti-government actions this too was attributed to Tătărescu, who was accused of deliberately protecting reactionary diplomats. On 5 November 1947 the communist-controlled majority in parliament passed a vote of no confidence in Tătărescu. He and his party colleagues resigned.

The next crisis concerned King Michael. Until now the king had seldom been attacked. It was known that he disliked Groza and the communists, but officially it was explained that he had been misled by bad advice from the Anglo-Saxon Powers. It was suggested that he had now learned his lesson, that the West could not help him and that he must accept the 'people's government'. He had in fact retired from politics. The Soviet government had shown its appreciation of his role in 1944 by awarding him its highest decoration, the Order of Victory. There was no republican propaganda. But as the successive liquidation of the anti-communist and independent non-communist parties turned Rumania into a 'popular democracy', it became clear that the days of the monarchy must be numbered. In November 1947 the king came with his mother to London for the wedding of Princess Elisabeth and then stayed abroad for some weeks, during which he became engaged to Princess Anne of Bourbon-Parma. On his return to Bucarest he was confronted with a demand for abdication. All power was already in communist hands, and it was clearly impossible to resist. He was permitted to leave the country and was granted some financial means. He had to put his name to a declaration prepared beforehand, which justified the abdication in communist phraseology. After his departure the official press began a campaign denouncing the past reactionary role of the monarchy, its accumulation of land and wealth, and the German origin of the dynasty.

The political sovietisation of Rumania was completed early in

1948. The government bloc was renamed People's Democratic Front. It was now a 'monolithic' organisation like the Yugoslav or Albanian. The Ploughmen's Front had been increased by the inclusion of a left-wing rump of the former National Peasant Party. The National Popular Party had been created in 1946 by the communists to attract middle-class intellectuals of left sympathies. Its nucleus was some of those who had been involved in the underground Patriots' Union of 1944.<sup>1</sup> It included several well-known communists who preferred not to be open members of the party, such as Professor Constantinescu-Iași, the Minister of Information. Besides these two satellites and the United Workers' Party, the P.D.F. also included the Hungarian People's Union. Elections were held in March. The official results were 405 seats for the Front and nine for two mildly oppositional groups—the Democratic Peasant Party led by a former colleague of Mihalache, Dr. Lupu, and the remnant of the Liberal Party still led by the aged Constantin Brătianu. The new parliament solemnly proclaimed Rumania a People's Republic, and accepted a constitution whose draft had been published before the election and which was closely modelled on that of the U.S.S.R. Communist supremacy was openly shown by the assumption of key cabinet posts by their leaders. Mrs. Pauker became Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gheorghiu-Dej Minister of National Economy and Chairman of the Planning Commission. Finance was given to Luca, Defence to Bodnăraș, Justice to Bunaciu, who replaced the no longer reliable Pătrășcanu.<sup>2</sup>

#### BULGARIA

One of the first acts of the Fatherland Front government, brought to power by the revolution of 9 September 1944, was to arrest the leaders of the old regime and to put them on trial for treason and 'war crimes'. The special tribunals created for the purpose passed death sentences on the three Regents (Prince Cyril, Professor Filov and General Mihov), twenty-two former ministers (including the ex-Premiers Bozhilov and Bagrianov and the ex-Ministers of the Interior Gabrovsky, Hristov and Stanishhev), eight close personal advisers of the late King Boris, and sixty-eight former members of parliament. The crime of the latter seems to have been that they voted for the adherence of Bulgaria to the Axis Three Power pact. Other former politicians received long prison sentences. Besides this a much larger number of army

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> For the disgrace of Pătrășcanu, see below, p. 314.

and police officers, guilty of collaboration with the Germans or brutality to the population, were executed or imprisoned. According to an official statement, by March 1945 the total number of sentences carried out was 2,138 executed, 1,940 sentences of twenty years, 1,689 of ten to fifteen years.

The brutality of these measures is to some extent a reflection of the hatred of the Bulgarian people for the old regime, which probably had a longer record of more intense ferocity than any other in Europe. But there were two factors which were bound to cause misgivings to Bulgarian democrats. The first was the condemnation to long periods of imprisonment of the leading members of the short-lived Muraviev government. A few days' delay in declaring war on Germany, and a decision to seek peace terms from the Western Powers (with whom Bulgaria was at war) rather than from the Soviet Union (with whom she was not) hardly seemed to justify sentences of life imprisonment on Muraviev himself and his Minister of the Interior, Virgil Dimov, and long terms of imprisonment on other members of his cabinet, who included the democrat leader, Nikola Mushanov, and the right agrarian leader Dimitar Gichev. These men had been the leaders of the moderate opposition to the dictatorships of King Boris and the old Regency. They had remained outside the Fatherland Front, and they had always had more sympathy for the West than for the U.S.S.R. Their condemnation appeared an act of petty personal revenge by the communists and their Soviet patrons.

The second alarming factor was the rapid assumption by the communists of control over the repressive organs of the state. The communist Minister of the Interior Yugov placed communists in key positions, and made use of the expert services of police officers of the old regime, whose past records could be used to blackmail them into execution of communist orders. Public order in many provincial towns and villages was taken over by local communists or by partisans descending from the mountains and forests. Many of these had personal scores to settle. 'Punishment of fascists' was often identified with private vengeance. Abuses of power by the new victors aroused widespread indignation, especially among the peasants. This was bound to influence the party with the most numerous potential following, the Agrarian Union. The agrarians soon found themselves in opposition to the communists within the Fatherland Front, resisting what seemed to them an attempt by the communists to monopolise the police,

to prevent the non-communist parties in the Front from organising themselves and to turn the Front into an instrument of their own domination.

In September 1944 the left agrarian leader, Dr. G. M. Dimitrov, who had been in British-held territory since 1941, returned home. Although a supporter of the Fatherland Front, he wished the Agrarian Union, as the party representing the most numerous social class in the country, to pursue a more independent policy. Though pressed both by his own party and by the communists to join the cabinet, he preferred to act as general secretary of the Agrarian Union and to re-establish its organisation throughout the country. This activity soon brought him into conflict with the communists. The opening of hostilities between British forces and E.L.A.S. in December made his position more difficult. Bulgarian communists considered this the first stage in an aggressive plan of 'British reaction' directed against the left-wing regimes in the Balkans. Dimitrov, who publicly maintained that Bulgaria should seek the friendship of the West as well as of the U.S.S.R., was suspected of having returned from the Middle East with sinister plans. Both the Communist Party and the Soviet occupation authorities began to press for his expulsion from the Agrarian Union. He was accused of spreading defeatist slogans among the Bulgarian troops serving beside the Red Army in Hungary. At a conference of the Union on 18 January 1945 he resigned his secretaryship.

His successor, Nikola Petkov, who had led the agrarians during the war, soon began in his turn to quarrel with the communists. In May a new congress of the party was held. A former right-wing agrarian, Obbov, came forward as a champion of close co-operation with the communists. The congress was packed with supporters of Obbov and with disguised communists. The Obbov section thus won a majority and obtained control of the party organisation and newspaper *Zemedelsko Zname*. Petkov resigned his secretaryship, but he and three other agrarian ministers who supported him remained in the government until August 1945, when they resigned as a protest against the government's methods in the election campaign. Their places were taken by Obbov and his friends. Thus the government still contained nominal agrarian representation, from the Obbov faction, but the majority of the Agrarian Union was in opposition.

A similar fate overtook the Social Democrat Party. It was divided already before the war between a right wing led by

Pastuhov and a left wing led by Cheshmedjiev. Only the latter took part in the Fatherland Front government. But even within its ranks disagreements began to appear. The communists pressed for ever closer co-operation from the socialists, which the latter regarded as a demand for complete subordination. The spokesman of the communist point of view within the socialist ranks was one of its leaders, Neikov. In May 1945 Neikov's followers, with the help of the police and a group of communist supporters, took forcible possession of the Socialist Party's newspaper *Narod*. In July a congress of the socialist-controlled consumers' co-operatives was packed with Neikov's men, who thus captured the organisation. Cheshmedjiev resigned from the government in August, and soon afterwards died from natural causes. A minority of socialists continued to be represented in the government, but the majority supported Lulchev, the successor to Cheshmedjiev. The leader of the original right-wing socialists, Pastuhov, who was from the beginning in opposition to the Fatherland Front, was arrested in February 1946 for criticising in a newspaper article a speech to the army by the communist leader George Dimitrov. In June 1946 he received a five-year prison sentence for this offence.

During the summer of 1945 the Bulgarian government announced its intention to hold elections. Police pressure against the opposition grew. Members of opposition parties, sponsors of opposition candidates, and the candidates themselves, were threatened and in some cases arrested or maltreated. In view of these conditions, the British and American governments considered that the election would not be free. As a result of notes from the British and American governments, the Bulgarians decided on 25 August to postpone the elections for three months. This concession was probably connected with the temporarily co-operative spirit shown by the Soviet government at the Potsdam Conference. In September the opposition parties obtained permission to publish their own newspapers. These soon attained circulations ten times greater than those of the governmental rump agrarian and rump socialist papers. They would have been still more successful if their paper allocation had not been restricted. Despite these concessions, persecution of opposition candidates and supporters in the country continued. The opposition leaders decided that it was hopeless to take part in the elections, and appealed to their supporters to abstain from voting. Despite further protests by the Western Powers, the

elections were held in November. In the opinion of the British and American missions, not only were they prepared in an atmosphere of terror, but the results were falsified on a large scale. The new parliament contained only representatives of the government coalition.

In December Bulgaria was discussed at the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Moscow. It was there decided that the Bulgarian government should be broadened to include 'suitable' representatives of the opposition parties, who should 'loyally' co-operate with the government. The task of consulting the Bulgarian government and opposition was entrusted solely to the Soviet government. Mr. Vyshinsky visited Sofia in January 1946, but was unable to persuade Petkov and Lulchev to join the government on his terms. He took the view that the Soviet government was empowered alone to interpret the Moscow decisions, and his interpretation was that the opposition had no right to make conditions. By refusing to join the government unconditionally, they were sabotaging the Moscow agreement. A further attempt to end the deadlock was made in March 1946, when conversations took place between Premier Georgiev and the opposition leaders. Agreement was nearly reached on the basis that the Ministry of Justice should go to an opposition representative, that the communist Minister of the Interior should have an opposition agrarian and an opposition socialist as under-secretaries in charge respectively of the militia and the administration, and that new free elections should be held with separate party lists. At the last moment the government refused these terms. According to Petkov, the change was the result of Soviet intervention.

The 'Zveno' party had hitherto remained in the government without any open split in its ranks. Its original founder and spiritual leader, Velchev, on being promoted General and appointed Minister of War, had decided that his military duties forbade his belonging to a party, and ceased to be a member. Nevertheless, his influence in the party remained strong. In the summer of 1946 Velchev came into conflict with the communists on the organisation and personnel of the army. The communist press began to attack him as a reactionary, reproaching him with his former personal friendship with Mihailović, and for the part which he played in the suppression of the agrarian government in Bulgaria in 1923. In June 1946 a new law transferred to the cabinet as a whole the powers previously held by the War

Minister. Velchev's A.D.C. was arrested and was later declared to have died. It was widely believed that his death was caused by torture intended to make him incriminate his chief. Shortly afterwards, Velchev was relieved of his duties on grounds of health. At the end of August he was appointed Bulgarian Minister in Switzerland. One of his close friends, General Stanchev, who had taken a prominent part in the revolution of 9 September 1944, and who, though not formerly a member of the 'Zveno', also had great influence in its ranks, was arrested. The party's official leader, Kimon Georgiev, co-operated completely with the communists and retained the Premiership until September 1946, after which he became Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister.

In the summer of 1946, an official propaganda campaign began against the monarchy. The dynasty, identified with Germany and with two national disasters, was genuinely unpopular. The proclamation of a republic was therefore hardly a controversial issue. The campaign culminated in a plebiscite held on 8 September, which gave an overwhelming majority for the republic. The boy king Simeon, with his mother and their attendants, left the country. On 27 October elections were held for the Grand National Assembly, which was to decide the new constitution. Despite continued police terror, the opposition put up candidates. Their opportunities of electoral campaigning may be judged by the fact that in the summer of 1946 fifteen members of the central committee of the Socialist Party, seven out of twenty-two members of the 'Presidium' of the Agrarian Union, and thirty-five out of eighty members of the Supreme Council of the Agrarian Union were in prison or concentration camps. An example of the grounds for arrest is the case of the agrarian journalist Kunev. The formal accusation stated that Kunev in an article had 'in a truly criminal manner called the Bulgarian government political and economic dreamers'. In the opinion of the British and American representatives in Sofia, the elections, like those of 1945, were not free, as they were preceded by arrests and intimidation, and followed by falsification of votes. The official results gave 78 per cent of the votes to the Fatherland Front. In the new parliament the communists had 277 seats, the other Front parties 87 and the opposition 101. A new government was formed with George Dimitrov as Premier. This former general-secretary of the Comintern and hero of the Reichstag trial in Leipzig in 1933 had remained in Moscow for the first year after 'liberation', sending written directives to the Communist Party from time to

time. He had returned to Bulgaria in November 1945, and a year later assumed formal political leadership.

First among George Dimitrov's tasks was the extermination of the opposition. The year 1947 marked the passage of Bulgaria from the second to the third stages of sovietisation. In 1946 some alleged conspiracies by military groups, the 'Neutral officers' and 'Tsar Krum', had been 'discovered' by the police. The arrested persons were induced to implicate Petkov. An opposition agrarian named Peter Koev was arrested in July 1946, and was tortured to make him sign a confession implicating Petkov. Released in order to take up his seat in parliament to which he had been elected, he was rearrested in February 1947 and condemned in June 1947 to fifteen years' imprisonment. On 5 June Petkov himself was arrested. His paper had already been suppressed in April by the familiar method of a 'printers' strike'.

The trial of Petkov took place in August 1947. It was a remarkable exhibition of 'popular democratic justice'.<sup>1</sup> Favourable evidence (of the former First Regent Professor Venelin Ganev and the former agrarian cabinet ministers Pavlov and Bumbarov) was excluded as 'not of essential importance'. Communist-organised demonstrations were held all over the country demanding death for the accused. The communist-controlled miners' union in the Sofia district declared that a death sentence on Petkov would give the miners 'an incentive for harder work and greater achievements in the production field'. The Public Prosecutor declared in court: 'Hundreds of thousands of telegrams passed by rallies, meetings and conferences in villages and towns, demanding the heaviest penalties for Nikola Petkov, are a sufficient indication of the people's verdict.' The government's case depended on the evidence of two colonels who appeared in court. These men's statements prove no more than that they had four conversations with Petkov between August 1945 and February 1946 in which anti-government talk occurred. The three judges at the trial were communists, as were four judges of the Supreme Court of Cassation.

On 16 August Petkov was condemned to death. The British and American governments protested at the verdict, but the sentence was carried out on 23 September. Some weeks later George Dimitrov produced an alleged confession by Petkov stating that he had been encouraged in his treasonable opposition to the

<sup>1</sup> See the official Bulgarian government publication, *The Trial of Nikola Petkov*, and the able analysis of it by Michael Padev in his book *Dimitrov Wastes no Bullets*.

Fatherland Front by the British and American representatives in Sofia. Dimitrov also later declared that if the Western Powers' protests had not attempted to dictate to the sovereign people's court of Bulgaria, Petkov's sentence could have been commuted to a term of imprisonment. This statement seemed all the more odious as it was known to all that George Dimitrov himself had been saved from Nazi vengeance at the Leipzig trial largely as a result of protests of world democratic opinion. A further tragic feature was that both Petkov's father and his brother had been murdered by fanatics who had called them traitors to the nation.

The only remaining opposition group was now the Socialist Party led by Lulchev. On 12 January 1948, when Lulchev stated in parliament that he would vote against the budget, as a mark of disapproval of the general policy of the government, Dimitrov threatened him with the following words: 'In this assembly I many times warned Nikola Petkov's group, but they would not listen. They lost their heads, and their leader lies buried. Reflect on your own actions lest you suffer the same fate as former members of your coalition who were foreign agents and enemies of Bulgaria'. Lulchev did not stop his opposition, and in the following summer the bully's threat was carried out. Lulchev was tried in November, and on 15 November was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. At his age it was merely a rather cruel form of death sentence. Meanwhile the Neikov group of collaborationist socialists decided on 26 January 1948 to fuse with the communists. The ceremony took place on 11 August.

In December 1947 the Bulgarian parliament accepted the new constitution, based on that of the U.S.S.R. By 1948 the Fatherland Front was as much a monolithic organisation as the People's Front of Yugoslavia. In March two independent-minded members of Zveno, the Bulgarian Minister in London Dolapchev and the Bulgarian Minister in Brussels Yurukov, resigned their posts and openly broke with the government. The remnants of Zveno and of the still smaller Radical Party of Kosturkov which had been in the Front since 1945, dissolved themselves formally at the beginning of 1949. They no longer saw any reason for existence apart from other Fatherland Front organisations and so merged themselves in the Front. When Tito had been denounced by Cominform, Bulgaria could claim to be the most 'advanced' of the 'popular democracies' on the way towards the only true democracy, the Soviet system. When Dimitrov died in July 1949, a 'Dimitrov legend' was created by official propaganda, on the model of the

'Lenin legend'. It was decided that Dimitrov's body, like Lenin's, would be embalmed. At the funeral in Sofia, the dead man's brother-in-law and successor as secretary-general of the party, Vlko Chervenkov, made a speech full of vows to the corpse, whose style was slavishly copied from the funeral oration delivered by Stalin over the corpse of Lenin in 1924.

#### YUGOSLAVIA

The Communist Party was already firmly in control of the National Liberation Front in Yugoslavia before the fighting was over. The new administration was based on the structure of people's committees which had been built up during the war against the Axis. By the summer of 1944 most of the mountainous and forested areas were already in the hands of Tito's forces. The cities and the plains were liberated in two stages, Serbia, Macedonia, Voivodina and most of Bosnia and Dalmatia in the autumn of 1944, the north and west in May 1945. At each stage a certain conflict arose between the mountaineers and the plainsmen. During the occupation the fighting had taken place in the mountains, and the new recruits to Tito's forces had come mainly from the mountain villages. Of the veterans of 1941—mostly intellectuals and industrial workers from the towns who had taken to the hills at the orders of the Communist Party—many had perished in battle: they were far outnumbered by Bosnian, Montenegrin and Dalmatian peasants. These were patriotic and brave soldiers, and some of them had even shown an unexpected talent for rough-and-ready administration in the early people's committees. But they were quite unqualified for the complicated tasks of government in modern cities. On the other hand the townsmen, who did understand these tasks, were suspect in their eyes because they had remained in the towns under enemy occupation. At the best they were poor patriots, at the worst 'collaborators'. For their part the townsmen despised as boastful yokels the hordes of guerrilla heroes who poured in, and were often rewarded with posts of responsibility and power for which they seemed unfitted. Much of the confusion of the next year or two was due to the mutual distrust and antipathy of these two groups. It would have caused enough trouble even if it had not been aggravated by ideological and political conflict.

The people's committees of the war period had had an element of spontaneity. They had recruited efficient local people of no special political affiliation, who had won genuine local popularity

by their efficiency. The new committees for the liberated cities and plains lacked this spontaneity. They were simply appointed by the communists, partly from the secret communist organisations which had worked underground in the cities during occupation, partly from promoted 'mountaineers', partly from individuals of miscellaneous types of whose loyalty the communist leaders had reason to be confident.

The National Liberation Front was renamed People's Front. It remained a monolithic organisation. The only party which had an independent organisation was the Communist Party. It, for reasons which have never been clearly explained, remained mysteriously hidden. Unlike the communist parties of neighbouring countries, it kept secret the names of its officers, and members were not encouraged to reveal their membership. Other parties, such as the dissident Croatian Peasant Party led by the former member of the Belgrade parliament Franjo Gaži, and the Republican Party led by the aged Prodanović, nominally existed, but were unable to organise separately. All key positions were held by communists or nominees of communists. The Communist Party prescribed the programme and the discipline of the Front. To use Soviet phraseology, the Front was the 'mass organisation' and the party was the 'directing nucleus'.<sup>1</sup>

The army and the police were firmly held by the communists. The Minister of the Interior was the Orthodox priest Zečević, a fine guerrilla leader, who cared little for doctrine, whether religious or political, and cheerfully left the conduct of policy to his communist friends. Under his nominal control, but the actual leadership of Alexander Ranković, a leading member of the Communist Party, was the secret political police, the Department for the Defence of the People (O.Z.Na.), which later changed its name to Administration of State Security (U.D.B.). Based on the Soviet model, it had proved its worth already under the occupation both in supplying intelligence and in liquidating the waverers and the disloyal. It soon established an impressive system of spies and counter-spies and informers in the cities. It paid special attention to those who had contact with foreigners, above all with British and Americans. It also showed skill and ingenuity in its interpretation of the notion of collaboration with the enemy. Business men whose concerns it was not convenient to nationalise on general grounds found themselves expropriated as 'collaborators', and in many cases sentenced to long prison terms.

<sup>1</sup> See Constitution of the U.S.S.R., article 126. Also pp. 307-14 below.

To have continued work under the occupation was treated as proof of 'collaboration', even if this had maintained employment for the workers, and the workers gave evidence that they had been well treated, even if there was evidence of the employer's hostility to the Germans and that he had contributed to secret collections of funds for the partisans. Great efforts were also made to incriminate former politicians.

These practices were naturally repugnant to those exiled politicians who had joined the March 1945 government. They soon found that they had no power, were not consulted, and could not build up their own party organisations. In August 1945 Milan Grol, the former leader of the Democrat Party, resigned from the government. He was followed a month later by Foreign Minister Šubašić. For some time before his resignation Šubašić had been seriously ill, and his house had been guarded by armed men who refused to allow the British Ambassador to visit him or to inquire after his health. The reply of Marshal Tito to his letter of resignation accused him of treacherously provoking foreign intervention in Yugoslavia. Šubašić and Grol both objected to the electoral law, which by disfranchising persons who had 'actively or passively collaborated' with the enemy made possible all sorts of political trickery. Grol and Trifunović, the leader of the old Radical Party, who had also returned from exile, at first made an agreement to put up candidates, in opposition to the official list in the parliamentary elections, which were fixed for November. At the end of September Grol obtained permission to publish a newspaper, *Demokratija*. Despite attacks on its distributors, and destruction of copies by communist toughs, it sold well. On 20 October the widow of the former Croatian Peasant Party leader Stephen Radić obtained permission to publish in Zagreb an opposition paper representing the old policy of the Croatian Peasant Party, *Narodni glas*. It was suppressed from the second issue. In view of the repeated obstruction or intimidation by the authorities, which made it impossible to organise meetings, communicate with branches in the country, or conduct electoral propaganda, Grol and Trifunović decided in November to abandon the struggle and to advise their supporters to abstain from voting. An appeal to the people to boycott the polls, published in *Demokratija* on the eve of the elections, was the occasion for its suppression. No opposition paper again appeared.

The official electoral commission announced that 253,000 persons were disfranchised and that 8,000,000 had the right to

vote. The elections took place on 11 November. Though there were no opposition candidates, arrangements were at least theoretically made for voters to record negative votes. Independent observers reported that they were orderly, that there were no visible acts of terror. It was, however, widely believed that the arrangements for secret balloting were in many places not used, so that a voter making use of them knew that he would be considered to have voted against the government, and that even where they were used many voters feared that there was some means by which their vote could be identified and themselves penalised. In view of these fears—which even when quite unjustified were still strong—and in view of the atmosphere preceding the elections, they could not be called free. It was further believed by many well-informed people that the voting boxes were falsified. The official results were 96 per cent for the government in the whole country.

One of the first acts of the new parliament was to proclaim Yugoslavia a republic (29 November 1945). The new constitution, based on that of the U.S.S.R., was formally adopted on 31 January 1946. In March 1946 Mihailović, his following reduced to a tiny band of fugitives in Bosnia, was captured. His trial opened in June. The evidence that he had collaborated with the Axis was overwhelming, but the manner of his trial resembled that of Moscow rather than of Europe. The trial was used to discredit the Western Powers, and the prosecution maintained, quite falsely, that the British had instructed Mihailović to contact the Axis and to attack the partisans. He was shot on 17th July.

In July 1946 Dr. Dragoljub Jovanović, the Serbian peasant leader, who had been elected to parliament on Tito's governmental list, and strongly supported the official programme of the People's Front and the new constitution, made some criticisms of official policy in a parliamentary speech. He opposed the new law on co-operatives. He considered the peasants were insufficiently represented in political life. He also objected to the powers conferred by a new law on the Public Prosecutors. Finally he blamed the government for exclusive reliance in foreign policy on the U.S.S.R. Though he had been strongly pro-Soviet for at least twenty years, he also valued friendship with the Western Powers. These criticisms let loose a storm of abuse from the communists. Jovanović was deprived by majority vote of his seat in the Serbian republican assembly. Belgrade University's faculty of law deprived him of his professorship. On 11 August a congress of his People's Peasant Party was summoned. Most of the alleged

delegates had been chosen by the communists, and obediently expelled him from the party. Later in the year he lost his seat in the central parliament. He was arrested in 1947, and brought to trial in September 1947. As it better suited the purposes of the government to accuse him of treason than of mere opposition, he was charged with taking orders from British agents to organise a 'peasant block' of Serbian and Croatian peasants against the government.<sup>1</sup> With him was tried Franjo Gaži, a Croatian agricultural engineer, who had always belonged to the left wing of the Croatian Peasant Party, and had, like Dr. Jovanović, supported the People's Front until he found the political domination of the communists intolerable.<sup>2</sup> Jovanović was sentenced to prison for nine years, Gaži for five.

During 1947 there were a number of political trials. The victims were prominent members of pre-war parties who had supported Tito because they believed in his publicly announced democratic programme, and became dissatisfied when they found that he had set up a dictatorship. All were charged, not with opposition, which was their real crime, but with passing state secrets, or slanderous information, to foreigners. The evidence published at the trials suggested that they had done no more than talk to their British or American friends in a manner critical of the regime. The two most important were the former Radical Party leader Miloš Trifunović (condemned to eight years in January 1947) and the Slovene professor Boris Furlan (death sentence, commuted to life imprisonment in August 1947). In February 1948 a former member of parliament for the Croatian Peasant Party, Jančiković, received a ten-year sentence. During 1947 and 1948 there were also several trials of alleged members of armed bands—Slovene White Guards, Croatian 'Crusaders'<sup>3</sup> and Serbian Chetniks. On 11 March 1948 the Orthodox bishop Nastić was sentenced to eleven years for helping Serbian terrorists in Bosnia.

On 6 May 1948 it was announced that the Minister of Light

<sup>1</sup> As I was one of the British subjects accused of having given such instructions to the two men on behalf of 'the British intelligence service', I must take this opportunity of stating that this part of the accusation was completely and utterly false. My conversations with both men (who made no secret of their oppositional attitude) in no way bore the character attributed to them by the Yugoslav Public Prosecutor. See also my letter to *The Times* of 25th October 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Gaži should not be confused with his distant kinsman of the same name, a former member of parliament for Maček's Croatian Peasant Party and leader of the puppet Croatian Republican Peasant Party which became absorbed in the People's Front. This Gaži became vice-premier of the Croatian republican government in 1946.

<sup>3</sup> These were Croatian nationalist and Catholic guerrillas, most though not all of whom had earlier supported Pavelić's Ustash regime.

Industry, the Croat Hebrang, and the Minister of Finance, the Serb Žujović, had been 'relieved of their duties'. A month later they were formally expelled from the People's Front. Both men were very prominent communists, members of the inner ring that ruled Yugoslavia. No explanation was given. Shortly afterwards it was announced that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia would meet in July for its first congress since the war. Then on 28 June, in the Czech communist paper *Rude Pravo*, appeared the communiqué of the Cominform in which the Yugoslav party was expelled for various crimes.

The economic sins imputed to Tito had all been committed to a greater extent by the communist parties of neighbouring countries. They will be referred to during the following chapters.<sup>1</sup> They earned Tito the barely compatible charges of Trotskyism, Buharinism and Menshevism. The two other main groups of charges concerned the organisation of the Communist Party and Yugoslavia's attitude to Russia.

The Cominform statement pointed out that officials of the Yugoslav Communist Party were appointed from above, not elected by the members, and that there was no free criticism within the party. It accused the leaders of maintaining in the party a 'disgraceful, purely Turkish, terrorist regime'. To a Western non-communist, sceptical of the freedom of election or criticism within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or of other East European countries, this accusation is not very convincing. More justifiable was the objection to the curious conspiratorial attitude of the Yugoslav party. It had in fact hidden behind the People's Front, and had concealed its own organisation and members. In September 1947 Tito had even declared that the party had no programme other than that of the Front. This behaviour certainly contrasted with that of the communist parties in all neighbouring countries, and was hard to understand. But the conclusion which the Cominform drew from it, that the party had lost its identity within the Front, and that the Front was subject to the influence of various classes and ideologies, was incorrect. In fact the People's Front of Yugoslavia was much more monolithic, and gave even less freedom to non-communists, than the fronts or coalitions of neighbouring countries.

The published letters between the Yugoslav and Soviet parties<sup>2</sup> show that Tito's real crime lay neither in economic policy nor in

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 270-2.

<sup>2</sup> The correspondence has been published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs under the title *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute*.

party organisation, but in insufficient reverence to the majesty of the great Soviet Union. Djilas, a leading communist, had dared to say that certain Red Army officers had behaved worse than British officers. The Yugoslav political police had dared to watch Soviet subjects as if they were citizens of bourgeois states. The Yugoslav government presumed to object when the Soviet secret service recruited Yugoslav subjects. The Yugoslav General Staff wished to cut down the number of Soviet military advisers, spoke disparagingly of the Soviet army's rules, and insisted that Yugoslavia had had a war effort of her own and not been liberated by the Red Army. The letters also asserted without any evidence that the Yugoslav Assistant Foreign Minister, Velebit, and the Yugoslav Ambassador in London, Leontić, were British spies. The striking feature of the Soviet letters is that there is no evidence of any action by the Yugoslav authorities hostile to the Soviet Union or friendly to the 'Western imperialists'. It seems always to be a matter of petty discourtesies. The Yugoslav communists are treated like disobedient children in a very strict school. Until further evidence is found to the contrary, one must conclude that the quarrel was sought not by Tito but by the Soviet leaders. Tito did not wish Yugoslav communism to be 'different'. Apart from the minor matter of party organisation, he committed no fault of policy that was not committed in greater measure by the other East European communists. The wounded vanity of Stalin and Molotov unnecessarily precipitated a quarrel whose consequences were far-reaching.

The 'Tito clique' did not capitulate, nor did the Yugoslav state break down. The Soviet 'military and civilian specialists' were recalled, just as Russian officers were recalled from Bulgaria in 1885 when Tsar Alexander III was displeased with Prince Alexander of Battenberg, and with as little effect. There were some defections among Yugoslav diplomats serving in Cominform countries and among students at Cominform universities. There were some changes in the governments of Montenegro and Macedonia. On 12 August the former Chief of Staff of the Yugoslav Army, General Arso Jovanović, was shot by a frontier guard as he tried illegally to cross the frontier into Rumania. There were occasional rumours of disaffection, but three years after the breach Tito is still firmly in the saddle, together with his colleagues who had been most denounced—Ranković, Djilas and Kardelj.

The danger from the Cominform did not cause Tito to modify the dictatorship of the Communist Party inside Yugoslavia.

Fortified by the acclamations of the party congress, which duly met in July 1948, he insisted on his determination to base his policy on the science of Marxism-Leninism. Non-communists and Cominform communists were to be persecuted alike. A two-front war was continued both at home and abroad.<sup>1</sup>

#### ALBANIA

As in Yugoslavia, so in Albania, the decisive struggle for political power had been won before the war was ended. Thus the internal politics of Albania are comparatively uneventful until the Cominform-Tito breach of 1948.

The Liberation Front was renamed Democratic Front after the war was over. In the autumn of 1945 it began preparations for elections. As in Yugoslavia, there were no opposition candidates, but provision was nominally made for negative votes. Polling took place on 2 December 1945. The official results were that 92 per cent of the qualified electors had voted, and that 93 per cent of the votes cast were for the Democratic Front. The Constituent Assembly thus elected met on 10 January 1946. One of its first acts was to proclaim Albania a republic. The exiled King Zog accepted the result without surprise or much protest, and retired to the hospitality of Egypt. The Assembly soon produced a constitution, which closely followed those of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

The Great Powers gave provisional recognition to Enver Hoxha's government on 10 November 1945. British and American military missions had been in the country since liberation, and U.N.R.R.A. was in action from August 1945, when it signed an agreement with the government. During 1946, however, relations between Albania and the Western Powers rapidly deteriorated. One reason was that many of the leading Albanian nationalist politicians had fled to Allied-occupied Italy or Greece, and that the Allied governments refused to hand them over to Enver Hoxha as 'war criminals'. Conspiracy trials were used to accuse the Western Powers of sinister intentions towards Albania.<sup>2</sup>

A further cause of Albanian distrust towards Britain was the agitation by nationalists in Greece for the annexation of what they called 'northern Epirus' but Albanians called 'southern Albania'. Though British policy on this question had never been officially

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of the Tito-Cominform dispute, see below, pp. 312-16.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in June 1946 one of thirty-seven accused Albanians 'confessed' at his trial that the British Lieutenant-Colonel Palmer had given him instructions to keep in touch with the nationalist leaders Fiqri Dine and Muharrem Bairaktar after the victory of Hoxha, and that the British Major Arnold had suggested the assassination of Hoxha.

stated, the Albanian government considered the British responsible for political agitation in a country occupied by British troops, whose government had been established after British armed action had defeated its rivals. Relations became so bad that it was decided in April 1946 not to send a regular British legation to Albania. The Corfu incident of October 1946, when a British destroyer was blown up by a mine which it appeared must have been laid by, or with the knowledge of, the Albanian authorities, made things still worse. After the withdrawal of the military mission early in 1947 there were no further official relations between Britain and Albania.

Tension between Albania and the United States reached a climax in September 1947, in connection with another spy trial. The accused maintained in court that the American and British missions had encouraged them to start an armed rising against the Hoxha regime. In particular, the technical school in Tirana, an American foundation directed by Mr. Harry Fulz, was described as a centre of sabotage. The school was probably the best educational institution in Albania, comparable on a smaller scale to the great Robert College in Constantinople and the American College in Sofia. This absurd attack against Mr. Fulz, who had spent years serving Albania, was, in the words of the official State Department protest on the trial, 'a sad act of ingratitude'. The American legation had left Albania in November 1946, when the Albanian government had refused to recognise obligations arising from pre-war treaty relations between Albania and the United States. Since then the United States has had no official relations with Albania. The only Western legation left is the French.

Whatever the real guilt of the various groups of alleged spies and conspirators, there were clear signs in 1947 that all was not well with Albania. In March the Bektashi abbot Baba Faja, who had been one of the heroes of the partisan movement and had continued to support the Front after victory, was murdered. At the end of May a number of government supporters in the Assembly were arrested. They included the Director of the National Bank, one of the few Albanian communists of many years' standing, Boshnjaku. The still more prominent Seyfulla Mallesheva was dismissed from the Ministry of Education and apparently deported to the Soviet Union.

A still greater crisis came with the Cominform-Tito breach a year later. The close friendship of the Hoxha government with Yugoslavia had been something of an embarrassment. The

annexation of the Albanian-inhabited Kosovo area by Mussolini in 1941 had been very popular, and its restitution to Tito in 1944 had cost Hoxha prestige. Now was an opportunity to recover popularity with Albanian public opinion and to acquire merit in Moscow. Yugoslav military missions and 'economic experts' in Albania had antagonised Albanians by their arrogance, and the economic treaty of November 1946,<sup>1</sup> which provided for co-ordination of the economic plans and the currency of both countries, looked as if it might be an excuse for exploitation of Albania. Hoxha therefore decided to break with Yugoslavia. He made a statement strongly supporting the Cominform accusations, and began to expel Yugoslav subjects. The economic treaty was denounced. The Yugoslav leaders were thenceforth always referred to in Albanian official statements as the 'Trotskyist nationalist clique'. They were accused of imperialism and of plans to subject Albania to a colonial exploitation of a capitalist kind. More concretely, they were accused of trying to prevent the industrialisation of Albania and to make her into a source of raw materials for Yugoslav industry. Indignation at the methods of the Yugoslav-Albanian joint companies (for railway-building, electrification, diesel oil, etc.) was expressed in terms which sound comic in the light of the methods used in similar joint companies in Rumania and Hung<sup>2</sup>ary<sup>1</sup> by the Soviet government which these Albanian protests covered in adulation as a model of anti-imperialism.

The quarrel with Yugoslavia inevitably led to the disgrace of those Albanian communists who had been closest to the Yugoslavs. Chief among these was Koci Xoxe, Vice-Premier and Minister of the Interior. At the congress of the Albanian Communist Party, held in Tirana in November 1948, the misdeeds of Xoxe were recounted by Enver Hoxha himself and by Tuk Jakova, head of the trade unions and now second secretary of the party. According to this version, ever since liberation Xoxe had betrayed the interests of party and country in favour of his Yugoslav patrons. Thanks to him, the party had been organised on erroneous Yugoslav lines. It had hidden itself behind the Democratic Front instead of coming forward openly as the vanguard of the proletariat. The office of organising secretary of the party had been combined with that of head of the police, in the person of Minister of the Interior Xoxe. Xoxe had thus used the state police to remove persons in and outside the party who stood in the way

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 261-2.

of his nefarious schemes. Xoxe had had the support of the 'political department' of the army, but had been opposed by the General Staff. He had also been supported by Pandi Kristo, head of the State Control Commission. Xoxe and Kristo had, since the meeting of the party's Central Committee held in Berat in November 1944, 'engineered behind the scenes an anti-Marxist campaign against the party executive and general secretary Enver Hoxha'. They had also organised a calumny campaign against a prominent communist, Nako Spiru, whom they had driven to suicide with false charges of collaboration with the enemy during the war. The parliamentary immunity of Xoxe and Kristo was suspended. In May 1949 their public trial opened. Xoxe confessed that he had organised a group of his own within the party, and that he had collaborated with the Yugoslavs although he knew that they were planning to make Albania the seventh republic of Yugoslavia, and that the Yugoslav General Vukmanović-Tempo was trying to create a Joint Balkan General Staff under control of the Yugoslav army. Xoxe was condemned and executed.

The Yugoslav leaders fiercely denied the Albanian charges. Far from turning Albania into a colony, they claimed, they had made great economic sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> Xoxe was a patriot who had merely served Albanian-Yugoslav friendship. He was a victim of the Cominform's 'unprincipled' and 'unsocialist' policy of subjection of small countries. These protests, however, made no impression on the Albanian leaders. Albania became something approaching a Soviet colony. The Soviet 'experts' withdrawn from Yugoslavia flooded Albania. Bound by treaty to Bulgaria and the U.S.S.R. and serving still as a supply base for the Greek rebels, Albania became the south-west bastion of Soviet Europe. In view of its social and cultural level, it might not unfairly be described as the Kirghizistan of the Adriatic.

<sup>1</sup> The Yugoslav paper *Borba* of 27 November 1948 stated that under the July 1946 economic treaty, Yugoslavia had delivered to Albania goods to the value of 1,600 million dinars in return for goods worth only 150 million dinars. Yugoslavia had also delivered 5,000 tons of wheat at a time when she herself suffered from wheat shortage, and had collected for Albania a sum of 52 million dinars for relief of victims of flood. In the first half of 1948 alone Yugoslavia had sacrificed 15 million dinars worth of foreign exchange to buy goods abroad on behalf of Albania.

## CHAPTER NINE

### ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND PLANNING

THE economic development of Eastern Europe since the end of the war falls naturally into three periods. The first was post-war dislocation, when military operations, occupation in turn by the German and Soviet armies, and internal disorder reduced most countries in the region to a desperate plight. The second stage was planned recovery, whose aim was to reach as soon as possible a level of production and standard of living approximating to those on the eve of the war. The third stage is that of longer-term plans of construction, intended to transform and develop the economy for many years ahead. In each stage, and especially in the third, examples from the experience of the Soviet Union were closely followed.

#### THE AFTERMATH OF WAR

The experience of the seven countries in the last months of the war had common features and differences. All but Bulgaria had had considerable numbers of German troops on their territory. All had been economically exploited by the Germans. All but Bulgaria had been fought over. All but Albania had been liberated or occupied by the Red Army. The differences lay in the different attitudes of both Germans and Russians to different peoples, and in the different nature of the warfare conducted on their territory.

As we have seen, the Germans systematically exploited the countries they had defeated, showing a special ruthlessness in Poland. Their treatment of the countries allied to them, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia, was not entirely bad. It is true that they ran up enormous debts, which with the defeat of Germany finally became a complete loss. But they also assisted the development of industry in these countries. In 1943 industrial output was considerably higher than in 1939. Even the annexed Czech lands benefited from this. It is true that in 1944 supplies of raw materials and equipment broke down. But industrial capacity in the countries allied to the Axis was still greater than it had been before the war. When their allies abandoned them in 1944, the Germans of course changed their attitude. But military circum-

stances permitted reprisals only in the case of Hungary, whose wartime material gains were thus largely destroyed.

Military operations left deep marks in central Poland and in Silesia, but western Poland from Łódź to Poznań escaped comparatively lightly. Eastern Slovakia was thoroughly ravaged. Transylvania suffered some destruction. Fighting raged right across Hungary. Her capital was shattered by artillery and bombing. But regular operations are not necessarily more destructive than irregular. The destruction of Warsaw, defended by the Polish Home Army, was more complete than any other. Yugoslavia and Albania were sacked by guerrillas and by enemy reprisals. In both countries it was small towns and villages which suffered. The bigger cities, held by the enemy until the end, were hardly harmed. Even Belgrade, bombed by the Germans in 1941 and the Allies in 1944, and captured after a fairly fierce battle by combined Yugoslav, Soviet and Bulgarian forces, emerged surprisingly little damaged.

The Soviet attitude to the 'liberated' peoples differed considerably. Yugoslavs and Czechoslovaks were regarded as friends. Bulgarians, though former enemies, were Slavs traditionally friendly to Russia. Poles were allies, but as their friendliness was far from certain they were regarded with suspicion. Rumanians and Hungarians were plain enemies, and of the two the Hungarians were the worse, as they had gone on fighting on Hitler's side longer. This difference of attitude in the military and political command was reflected in the behaviour of the troops, who were presumably given directives corresponding to the differences. Everywhere the Red Army shocked the liberated populations by the barbarity and indiscipline of its soldiers.<sup>1</sup> But in Rumania and Hungary an orgy took place such as Europe had not seen for centuries. Its effect should not be underestimated. It was not, as western apologists of the U.S.S.R. maintain, a regrettable incident partly excusable by the sufferings of the Soviet peoples under German occupation. It was the result of a deliberate hate campaign begun by the Soviet leaders at the time when the Soviet state was shaking, when a frenzy of racial hatred against the invaders seemed the surest way to rally the suffering Soviet peoples behind their government. As the Soviet soldiers advanced into Europe, they were encouraged to revenge themselves on the

<sup>1</sup> For two personal records, see Imre Kovács, *Im Schatten der Sowjets*, and Alexandra Orme, *From Christmas to Easter*, both referring to Hungary. The first is—hardly surprisingly—very anti-Soviet. The second, by a Polish lady married to a Hungarian, is remarkably free from rage, and often penetrating.

'fascist and bourgeois hordes' whose lands they entered. It is true that the Germans and their allies had committed abominable outrages on Soviet territory. But this vengeance was wrought not on soldiers but on Hungarian and Rumanian, and to a lesser extent Polish and Bulgarian, civilians, of whom the vast majority were innocent of any crimes against Soviet subjects, and whom it was now supposed to be official Soviet policy to conciliate. Serbs and Czechs were better treated, but even they did not like what they saw of the Soviet soldiers. The millions of Europeans who personally experienced outrages will never forget the meaning of the word 'liberation'.

A brief catalogue of the losses sustained from the three main causes—warfare, German pillage and Soviet pillage—will give some impression of the degree of devastation. The worst human casualties were of course those of Poland and Yugoslavia. In Poland about 6,000,000 people perished, of whom at least half were Jews. In Yugoslavia, with rather less than half the population, losses were some 2,000,000. Rumania lost about 500,000 in her two wars on two sides. Hungary's military losses were only about 100,000, to which must be added 220,000 Jews massacred in 1944. Both Rumania and Hungary had large numbers of prisoners-of-war in Russia, not all of whom have come back after four years. The Hungarian prisoners included many press-ganged by the Soviet troops after hostilities had ceased. Czechoslovakia lost 38,000 executed by the Gestapo, including a very high percentage of intellectuals, and 200,000 deportees who never returned from Germany. Albania lost 28,000 out of 1,000,000, and Bulgaria only 30,000 out of 7,000,000.

Estimates of material damage are of necessity unprecise. But the following figures, derived from U.N.R.R.A. reports, if not absolutely certain, at least give a correct general picture.

Losses of livestock were heaviest in Poland (43 per cent of horses, 60 per cent of cattle, 70 per cent of pigs); Hungary (39 per cent horses, 44 per cent cattle, 78 per cent pigs); Yugoslavia (60 per cent horses, 54 per cent cattle, 52 per cent pigs, 50 per cent sheep). Bulgarian and Rumanian losses were fairly light. In Czechoslovakia, a special case was eastern Slovakia, where some 80 per cent of all livestock was lost. Elsewhere in the country losses were much smaller.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis reports, Nos. 11, 16 (Czechoslovakia); 30, 35, 44 (Poland); 33, 47 (Hungary); 23, 27 (Yugoslavia); and 46 (Albania). They are a valuable source of information, not only on destruction and relief, but also on the first reconstruction measures of the governments.

Communications suffered heavily. In Hungary 90 per cent of the large bridges on the railways and 63 per cent of medium bridges were destroyed, and 69 per cent of locomotives and 86 per cent of freight cars were lost. In Yugoslavia half the total rail track and three-quarters of railway bridges were destroyed, and losses of rolling stock were on a similar scale. Czechoslovakia lost 11 per cent of locomotives and 28 per cent of freight cars. In Poland losses to transport were estimated at 3,500 million U.S. dollars.

In Yugoslavia the heaviest housing losses were in Bosnia, where 29 per cent of houses were utterly destroyed and a further 15 per cent seriously damaged. In eastern Slovakia nearly half the population were made homeless. Approximate estimates by official sources of damage to industry are for Poland 5,700 million U.S. dollars, for Czechoslovakia rather more than 1,000 million U.S. dollars. In Hungary losses in the engineering industry were estimated at 40 per cent, in textiles 13 per cent, and iron and steel 12 per cent. The total material loss to Hungary was estimated as 40 per cent of the national income. The estimate of total material loss in U.S. dollars for Poland was 18,200 million; for Albania (with a population more than twenty times smaller), 600 million.

Apart from these severe direct losses, great economic damage was done by the fact that the whole region was cut off from its old sources of raw materials and its markets. Particularly important was the collapse of the German market, towards which their trade had been increasingly directed even before the war. A further cause of impoverishment was the fact that large areas had not been sown in 1945.

The work of U.N.R.R.A. was of vital importance in 1945 and 1946 in Yugoslavia, Poland, Albania and Czechoslovakia. Hungary received a very small quantity of U.N.R.R.A. help in 1946, which was useful but not decisive. Bulgaria neither needed nor had any claim to U.N.R.R.A. help. Rumania had no claim, as a defeated country, but despite her natural wealth she was reduced by drought and devastation to misery by the winter of 1946-7. But by that time U.N.R.R.A. had ceased to operate. Some American help was sent but it too was not of decisive importance.

The total value of U.N.R.R.A. help to the four countries, in U.S. dollars, was as follows:<sup>1</sup> Poland 481 million, Yugoslavia 420 million, Czechoslovakia 270 million, Albania 24 million. The

<sup>1</sup> Statement of Mr. F. La Guardia, chairman of U.N.R.R.A., to the United Nations Assembly, October 1947.

main headings were food, clothing, medical supplies, agricultural rehabilitation and industrial rehabilitation. The first three items in each case formed about one-half the total. The main items of industrial rehabilitation were transport and communications equipment, fuel and lubricants, textile and leather raw materials, and chemical and engineering materials. Agricultural rehabilitation consisted mainly of livestock, seeds and machinery. It is probably Yugoslavia which owes most to U.N.R.R.A. Large imports of food and of transport saved hundreds of thousands from starvation. Imports of machinery, though small, were also of great value. When the U.N.R.R.A. programme was completed Yugoslavia had more tractors than ever before the war.

The currencies were all greatly inflated when war ended. In Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia more than one currency was in use (Reichsmark, Slovak crown and Hungarian pengö in the first and Reichsmark, Croatian kuna, Serbian dinar, Bulgarian lev, Hungarian pengö and Albanian lek in the second.) The Polish, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav and Bulgarian governments introduced currency reforms before the end of 1945. Bank deposits were blocked. Individuals were only allowed small amounts of the new currency, while businesses were supposed to have a minimum for current expenses. Capital levies and special taxes on war profits were introduced, which took the greater part of the blocked balances. In all four countries a strict credit and circulation policy was pursued. The revival of production and U.N.R.R.A. help, and in the case of Bulgaria the comparatively small scale of destruction, ensured the minimum quantity of goods. Thus inflation was avoided.

Hungary and Rumania were less fortunate. Neither received substantial assistance from the West, and both were subject to crushing Soviet demands. The peace treaties fixed for both the sum of 300 million U.S. dollars in reparations, of which Hungary paid two-thirds to the U.S.S.R. and one-third to Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, while Rumania paid the whole sum to the U.S.S.R. This sum was of course smaller than the total damage incurred in the portions of the Soviet Union where the two armies had fought. But it was larger than at first sight appeared, for the goods in which reparation payments were made were priced at 1938 price levels. This meant that the actual cost was from two and a half to three times greater than the nominal sum. But formal reparations by no means exhausted the Soviet bill. Under Article 23 of the Rumanian armistice, movable property seized from Soviet

territory by Rumanians had to be restored in addition to reparations. This article was liberally interpreted and ruthlessly enforced. Ingenuity and manpower which might well have been devoted to more urgent purposes at a time when the war with Germany was still on, were spent in tracking down even minor objects. Far more important, however, for both countries was the obligation to maintain the Soviet forces in transit and occupation. This was used to extract not only the normal requirements of the troops but also very large quantities of food, civilian clothing and various luxuries which were exported from Rumania and Hungary. Thirdly there were the 'unofficial' requisitions and loot, especially severe in the first months of 'liberation'. These three items together cost each country certainly no less than the sum total fixed for reparations—300 million U.S. dollars. According to some estimates they may have been more than twice as costly. Finally there was the Soviet claim to German property in both countries, which was also liberally interpreted. The huge debt of Germany to her allies could not be recovered, but the U.S.S.R. claimed the full amount of debts owed by the satellite countries to Germany. Moreover in taking over German property the Soviet authorities refused all liabilities to third persons arising from them, though taking for themselves all assets.

Economic disaster came first in Hungary. Devastation, Soviet demands and dislocation of trade produced their effects. Some raw materials were imported from the Soviet Union, but reparations deliveries took up a large proportion of the goods produced therewith. Taxation receipts were negligible. The extreme shortage of manufactured goods made the peasants unwilling to give up their produce. Factories had to employ their workers and vehicles in food-hunting expeditions to the villages. The currency rapidly fell from the summer of 1945. Between June 1945 and January 1946 the note circulation increased sixteen times. A device known as the 'tax pengö', introduced in January 1946, slowed up the decline for a few weeks only. By the summer of 1946 the sterling-pengö rate reached milliards of milliards. In July it had twenty-seven o's, the highest figure known in financial history. Attempts were made to pay workers in 'calories' (of food). Those who had goods to barter tried to bargain with the peasants. Almost the whole urban population lived in fear of hunger, none perhaps more than the professional class. In these circumstances the effort of the Budapest workers was truly heroic. Thanks to them, by the summer the factories were again turning out some

goods. The harvest was moderately good. When it was in, and stocks of manufactured goods were at last available, and with the psychological gain of the return of the gold reserve of 32 million dollars from United States custody, the government on 1 August introduced the new currency. There followed a period of great money shortage, of restricted credits and low money incomes. Hardship continued, but at least money had a value. One important feature of the new price level, fixed together with the stabilisation, was that the relationship between agricultural and industrial prices was very much more unfavourable to agriculture than it had been in 1939.

Inflation came later to Rumania. The country was richer and had suffered less. The main cause of economic strain was the Soviet occupation, to which in the winter of 1946-7 was added a really disastrous drought, involving starvation in parts of Moldavia and great shortages in all but the western provinces. The currency fell throughout 1946 and the first half of 1947. A rough indication can be given by the unofficial rate at which the pound was exchanged into lei by the British Military Mission in Rumania.<sup>1</sup> The rate was 32,000 at the end of 1945, 130,000 in the summer of 1946, 500,000 in early 1947, and over 1,000,000 by the summer. Stabilisation was attempted on 15 August 1947. As in the other currency reforms, balances were blocked and extremely small amounts of the new currency were allowed to individuals. But a new decline set in in the autumn. The communists blamed the liberal leader Tătărescu, whose party held the Finance Ministry. When the ministry was taken by the prominent communist Luca, things improved. Whether this was due to communist wisdom, or to more ruthless taxation and the results of an improvement in industrial output which had begun earlier, is not clear. But by the summer of 1948 Rumania was at last well on the way to recovery.

#### NATIONALISATION

The first aim of all the communist-led coalitions was to control what Lenin once called the 'commanding heights' of the economy, especially mines, power, communications and heavy industry. In all Eastern Europe the railways were already state-owned. So were certain other major enterprises such as the Pernik coal mines in Bulgaria or the M.A.V.A.G. locomotive works in Hungary. But the great majority of large enterprises, which were privately

<sup>1</sup> Barker, *Truce in the Balkans*, pp. 113-14.

owned, were effectively controlled by the new governments at an early stage. Formal nationalisation came later and in different ways in each country.

Czechoslovakia and Poland were the first countries to pass far-reaching nationalisation laws. By the time of liberation all important enterprises in both countries were completely controlled, and most were also owned, by Germans. They could therefore be expropriated on patriotic grounds without compensation. Enterprises owned by Allied capital would require compensation, but the Czechoslovak and Polish governments, as allied Powers, could negotiate with them on equal terms.

Czechoslovakia's nationalisation law was passed on 24 October 1945 by the provisional parliament. It covered all banks, insurance, mines, armaments and munitions plants, and most of the iron and steel and chemical industry. In addition, all factories in any branch of industry which employed more than 400 persons were nationalised. Compensation was promised to owners innocent of 'collaboration', but was in fact extremely small. Large 'national enterprises' were formed, grouping a number of factories together. Regional and central boards of industries were set up, under the ministries of Industry and Food.

Immediately after the liberation enterprises belonging to Germans and Hungarians had been seized and placed under the direction of appointed 'national administrators'. The future of those ex-German enterprises which did not fall into any of the categories nationalised by the law was a source of controversy. The communists and social democrats wished them all to be nationalised, the other parties wished to dispose of them to private Czech business. A compromise of March 1947 provided that those which existing national enterprises considered necessary for the completion of their production process should be nationalised, the rest be privately owned.

For two years private enterprise survived in all parts of the country. Some privately owned factories were very successful, and increased their capacity even beyond the limit which in 1945 had qualified a factory for nationalisation in any branch—employment of 400 workers. The success of private enterprise was attributed by the communists to the unscrupulous methods and exploitation of workers by capitalists, by their opponents to greater efficiency than the allegedly cumbrous nationalised factories could attain. The communists demanded an extension of nationalisation. Their opponents claimed that all parties had

agreed that the law of 1945 should be a maximum. This dispute was one of the contributory causes of the communist *coup d'état* of February 1948. After it a new nationalisation law was introduced, which took over all enterprises employing more than 50 persons. Even smaller businesses in fact became nationalised.

The Polish law was passed in January 1946 by the provisional parliament (K.R.N.). It covered all German-owned enterprises, of whatever size and in whatever branch, without compensation; all other enterprises, whoever their owners and whatever their size, in mining, power, communications, armaments, sugar, textiles, printing, flour-milling and brewing, with compensation; and all other factories, in whatever branch, employing more than 50 persons, also with compensation. In practice compensation was very small. The limit of 50 persons was later raised to 100 and in certain cases to 200. New private enterprises could be started, and could even exceed the maximum number of employees, but they required a licence, and could not be allowed in any of the branches which had been wholly nationalised. Private business was taxed more heavily than nationalised enterprises. In practice private business did not flourish in Poland as in Czechoslovakia. By the end of 1948 only 6 per cent of Polish industry was in private hands.<sup>1</sup>

In Yugoslavia most industry was taken by the state soon after liberation. But the government did not at first proceed to formal nationalisation. It preferred to seize businesses on the grounds that their owners had collaborated with the enemy. This notion was extremely widely interpreted. Simply to have continued production was in some cases considered proof of treason. Even men who had had no relations with the Germans, who could prove their patriotic attitude, who were begged by their workmen to keep them employed, and had even given secret money contributions to the partisan movement, found themselves deprived of their property as 'collaborators'. This procedure may have been chosen in order to save the government the expense of compensation. But the gain was small, because in fact the compensation paid by the governments which introduced nationalisation was negligible. On the other hand the Yugoslav policy created plenty of unnecessary bitterness. It was not until early 1947 that formal nationalisation of industry was introduced.

The situation was more delicate in the three ex-enemy states. German property had become Soviet by the armistice terms, and

<sup>1</sup> Minc, speech to Congress of Polish United Workers' Party, December 1948.

could only be controlled by the governments on whatever terms the Soviet authorities allowed. Allied property could not formally be nationalised by defeated enemies. It was in fact specifically protected in the peace treaty. Home capitalists could hardly be accused of 'collaboration' when the country had been at war with the Allies. It was therefore found convenient for some time to leave the factories nominally under private ownership. In the economic crises of Hungary and Rumania the capitalists were a useful scape-goat. They were burdened with heavy obligations to provide for their workers. Rumanian factories had canteens and shops (*Economate*), which could only be stocked by expensive purchases on the black market but had to sell at low prices. The continuing hardships arising from the general economic situation were blamed by the communist agitators in the factories on the 'unsocial behaviour' of the owners. In Hungary reparations were used as a means to drive private business to bankruptcy. The government was supposed to pay the factories for the goods which they delivered to the Soviet authorities as reparations. In fact the government simply did not pay, and the factories first exhausted their funds and then sought loans from the National Bank. This enabled the government, with brazen dishonesty, to accuse the owners of incompetence. Private ownership, the communist leaders argued, was ruining the Hungarian economy. Nationalisation was required for efficiency. Thus Hungarian and Rumanian policy was to make private business pay for the national economic disaster until it was ruined, and then take over without any obligation of compensation.

Nationalisation came piecemeal in Hungary. The mines were taken over early in 1946. At the end of the year the three great heavy industrial concerns Manfred Weiss, Ganz and Rimamurány were combined with two state concerns in a Heavy Industries Centre (N.I.K.). In January 1948 all the banks were nationalised. In March 1948 came the general nationalisation law, which covered all factories employing more than 100 persons. In Rumania the first stage was the creation, in the summer of 1947, of a number of industrial boards (*sindicate*), grouping factories together in their main industrial branches. The boards controlled the allocation of raw materials and machinery, and decided what types of goods should be produced and where they should be sold. Their directors were appointed by the Minister of National Economy. Formal nationalisation came in June 1948. It did not specify the size of firms to be nationalised, but simply affected all

firms of national importance. Bulgaria's nationalisation law was passed in December 1947, and covered all industry and banks.

The position of Allied firms in both ex-Allied and ex-enemy countries provided a long series of disputes. Czechoslovakia and Poland offered small compensation. The position of the British firms in Yugoslavia was formally settled by the agreement of January 1949, but the provisions for the payment of the not very generous sums were still not entirely clear. The Rumanian oil industry in 1946 was mainly owned by Allied capital (51 per cent Anglo-Dutch, 11 per cent American, while 28 per cent belonged to the Soviet company Sovrompetrol). The British and American firms suffered endless difficulties. Most of their production went as reparations to the U.S.S.R., and the government did not repay them. Only 3 per cent of the output could be sold on the free market, which did not enable them to obtain foreign currency with which to buy urgently needed new equipment. They were forced into borrowing. In the summer of 1947 the Ministry of Mines appointed administrators to both British and American firms. The administrators interfered in details of organisation, and prepared accusations of inefficiency, corruption and profiteering during the war against the U.S.S.R. The firms' managers were accused of deliberately sabotaging production. In the face of these obstacles, a meeting of the shareholders of Astra, the Shell Company's branch in Rumania, decided in March 1948 to declare the company 'forcibly dissolved'. Similar methods of obstruction and accusation were used in Hungary against the American-owned oil company 'Maort', which was effectively seized by the government in 1948. Finally the Hungarian government nationalised all allied firms in the autumn of 1949.

Not only industry and banking, but also trade was progressively nationalised. By the end of 1948 most of the wholesale trade of Eastern Europe was controlled either by state-owned shops or by state-controlled co-operatives. In Poland a struggle developed in May 1947 between the co-operative organisation Spolem, a stronghold of the Socialist Party, and state shops. The communists denounced the 'harmful autonomy tendencies' of the co-operative movement. This 'battle of trade' ended with the victory of the communist-sponsored state shops. By the end of 1948 only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of Poland's wholesale trade was privately owned, and the 'state sector' was rapidly penetrating the retail trade. In Yugoslavia wholesale trade was taken over at an early stage. In the retail trade, private ownership accounted in 1945 for 85 per

cent of the turnover, in 1946 for 48 per cent, and in 1947 for 12 per cent. In May 1948 a new law nationalised all remaining private retail businesses. In Bulgaria there was very little private trade left at the end of 1948, in Rumania slightly more. In Czechoslovakia the process was slower, but the end is the same.<sup>1</sup>

#### RECOVERY PLANS

Four countries introduced short-term recovery plans from the beginning of 1947. Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria had Two-Year Plans (1947-8), Poland and Hungary Three-Year Plans (1947-9). Rumania introduced in 1948 a single-year plan for 1949. The Yugoslav plan is in a separate category. It was for five years, and provides not only for recovery but for a great deal of new construction. It will therefore be considered later, together with the longer-term plans for the other countries, which were announced when their recovery plans were nearing completion. Albania's plan was at first dependent on Yugoslavia, and then had to be radically changed after the Cominform-Tito quarrel which led to a rupture of Albanian-Yugoslav economic relations. It will therefore be considered in connection with Yugoslavia.

The Czechoslovak Two-Year Plan provided for an investment of 70 milliard crowns.<sup>2</sup> Of this sum 22 milliard crowns was to be devoted to Slovakia, a proportion higher than Slovakia's share in

<sup>1</sup> This represents a much greater speed of nationalisation in trade than took place in Russia after the Revolution. In retail trade the share of private business in the total turnover was 75 per cent in 1922-3, 48 per cent in 1924-5, 25 per cent in 1927-8. It was only eliminated after 1929. Many small industrial enterprises were also privately owned during these years. Source, Prokopovich, *Russlands Volkswirtschaft unter den Sowjets*. The veteran Russian economist considers that the eventual nationalisation of all trade proved to be one of the greatest weaknesses of the Soviet economy.

<sup>2</sup> During 1949 the official exchange rates of the East European currencies were as follows: one U.S. dollar = 100 Polish zloty; 50 Czechoslovak crowns; 11.5 Hungarian forint; 50 Yugoslav dinars; 150 Rumanian lei; 285 Bulgarian leva. The Albanian lek was fixed in 1946 as exactly equal to the Yugoslav dinar. The breach of economic relations between Yugoslavia and Albania in 1948, and the peculiar foreign trade position of Albania to-day, make it impossible to give any significant international equivalent for the lek. In the following pages I have stated sums in national currencies, without attempting to convert them into western currencies. My source for the distribution of investment between branches of the national economies in the short-term plan of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria is the *Economic Survey of Europe in 1948*, published by the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations. Sources for the official fulfilment results are stated in the text. Source for the Rumanian plan for 1949 is the speech by Gheorghiu-Dej in parliament on 27 December 1948. For the long-term plans, my source for the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav plans is the official text of the plans; for the Bulgarian plan the report by the chairman of the Planning Commission, Tarpeshev, to the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party in December 1948; for the Polish plan the report by Minc to the Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party in December 1948; for the Hungarian plan the speech of Gerö in the debate in parliament on the plan in December 1949. Source for the Albanian-Yugoslav treaty is U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis paper No. 46, while the source for the Albanian Two-Year Plan is stated in the text. See also below, pp. 247, 258 footnote.

either the population or the wealth of the whole republic. Of the total investment 36 per cent was to go to industry and mining, 22 per cent to transport, 35 per cent to housing and public services, and 7 per cent to agriculture. The investment in housing included both factory and public building, the share of private dwellings being comparatively small. The general aim was a level of output 10 per cent above that of 1937, but in some industrial branches the target was much higher. The low figure for agriculture should not be taken to mean that this branch of the economy was neglected. A considerable part of the industrial production was for the needs of agriculture. For instance, output of tractors and fertilisers was to be substantially increased. In a speech in parliament in October 1948, Prime Minister Zápotocky stated that the industrial part of the plan had been satisfactorily fulfilled. The 1937 level had been surpassed by 18 per cent in mining, by 33 per cent in electric power, by 30 per cent in engineering and by 14 per cent in chemicals. The building target, however, had been reached only to the extent of 70 per cent, and private house building only 47 per cent. Agriculture had suffered severely from the drought of 1947. The grain harvest, and grain deliveries to the authorities, had been only two-thirds of the quantities planned. Output of beef and pork in the first half of 1948 had been slightly more than half, and milk five-eighths, of the targets.

The proposed investment of the Polish Three-Year Plan was 340 milliard zloty. Distribution of investment between branches of the economy was industry and mining 39 per cent, transport and communications 24 per cent, agriculture 13 per cent, housing and public services 18 per cent. Comparisons with the level of output of earlier years are very difficult owing to the changes in frontiers. The area at present contained within Poland had in 1938 (the year taken by the Polish planners for comparison) a very much greater industrial output than the area which in 1938 constituted the Polish state. The present population of Poland is considerably smaller than that either of pre-war Poland or of the present area of Poland before the war (24 million instead of 35 or 33).

The Three-Year Plan target for industry was 152 per cent of 1938 level for old Poland, which was about 70 per cent of the 1938 level for the present area of Poland. Heavy industry was to be 250 per cent of the 1938 old Poland level, and consumers' goods industry only 125 per cent. Output of motor lorries was to be twenty-

six times, locomotives eleven times, agricultural machinery three times and machine tools one-and-a-half times greater than the 1938 old Poland level. Output of fertilisers was to increase by 60 per cent, and textiles were to reach the 1938 level.

The target for agriculture was to be 80 per cent of the 1938 level for old Poland. As the new territories were less agricultural than those lost in the east, but their agriculture had been more efficient, the difference between the total agricultural output of 1938 in the old and the new area was much smaller than in the case of industry. The Three-Year Plan, like the other East European plans, gave much more attention to industry than to agriculture. But apart from general considerations of policy, this was justifiable by the fact that the territorial changes had considerably altered the relationship between the industrial and agricultural population. As moreover the whole population was smaller by one-third than before the war, the achievement of the plan would mean a higher income per head than in 1938.

The results of two years of the plan were summarised by Minc, the communist Minister of Industry, in a speech to the first congress of the 'fused' United Workers' Party<sup>1</sup> in December 1948. The proportionate share of industry and agriculture in national production had been 45.5 : 54.5 in 1937, and was 64 : 36 in 1948. The proportionate share of capital goods and consumers' goods in industrial production had been 47 : 53 in 1937, and was 54 : 46 in 1948. The industrial target for 1947 had been exceeded by 6 per cent, and in 1948 it was estimated that it would be exceeded by 10 per cent. In agriculture, the sowing and harvesting plans had been fulfilled, and the aims set for horse- and cattle-breeding had been achieved. Pig-breeding, however, was substantially behind. In 1945 almost half the cultivatable area had lain fallow, in 1948 90 per cent had been sown. Production of bread grains per head was 22 per cent higher than before the war. Production of meat and edible fats per head had been 21 per cent of the 1937 level in 1945, and had risen to 92 per cent in 1948. Minc also claimed that real wages at the end of 1948 were on the average 10 per cent higher than before the war. In November 1949 the State Planning Commission claimed that the Three-Year Plan had been completed in two years ten months.

The total investment proposed for the Hungarian Three-Year Plan was 6,585 million florint. Of this sum 32 per cent was to go to industry and mining, 27 per cent to transport and communi-

<sup>1</sup> For the formation of the party, see pp. 179, 311.

cations, 9 per cent to agriculture and 22 per cent to building and public services. The industrial level at the completion of the plan was to be 27 per cent higher than in 1938, while agriculture was to reach 91 per cent of the 1938 level. The output of iron, metallurgy and engineering was to be 54 per cent higher than 1938, of chemicals 40 per cent higher, of electric power 43 per cent higher, and of textiles 25 per cent higher. Industrial production of benefit to agriculture included the attainment by 1949 of a yearly output of 3,700 tractors, and greatly increased quantities of nitrogen fertilisers and superphosphates. The chief economic planner of the Communist Party, Gerö, declared in December 1949 that the plan targets had been fulfilled in two years and eight months. In particular, mining output and production of machine tools had surpassed the plan. Steel output was already higher than it had been in the peak period during the war. Investment had been 18 per cent greater than was originally planned. Gerö also claimed that in the three-year period the standard of living had risen by 38 per cent.

The proposed investment under the Bulgarian Two-Year Plan was 55,000 million leva. Of this sum 45 per cent was to go to industry and mining, 15 per cent to transport and communications, 6 per cent to agriculture and 28 per cent to building and public services. Special attention was given to electric power. A number of new dams, hydro-electric and thermo-electric centres were to be set up. The output of ores was to be increased nine times. Very large increases were to be made in industries which had hardly existed before the war, including chemicals and rubber (to increase by 142 per cent) and iron, metal and engineering (by 67 per cent). Building was to increase by 85 per cent and textiles by 66 per cent. In a speech at the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party in December 1948, the communist head of the Economic Council, Tarpeshev, stated that in 1947 the plan had been achieved in industry to the extent of 85 per cent, in 1948 to 99 per cent. Shortcomings were attributed to the drought, which had deprived the food industry of some of its raw materials, and, by making necessary larger imports of food than had been anticipated, had reduced the amount of industrial raw materials that could be imported. Coal-mining output was expected to be 88 per cent of the two-year target, and electric power construction 69 per cent. The livestock programme had been fairly successfully carried out. Horses and sheep were nearly up to their pre-war numbers, while cattle were 8 per cent and pigs 26 per cent more numerous.

In Rumania 1948 was a year of industrial recovery, at the end of which output approached that of 1938. In iron and steel and in textiles, the 1938 level was surpassed. The yearly plan for 1949, introduced by the Minister of National Economy, Gheorghiu-Dej, in a speech in parliament on 27 December 1948, provided for an investment of 82 milliard lei: 36.8 per cent was to go to mining and heavy industry, 10.4 per cent to light industry, 9.4 per cent to agriculture. The general industrial output was to be raised to 140 per cent of the 1938 level. Particular branches were to increase by the following percentages above 1938: coal mining 15, oil 13.7, cast iron 35, steel 16, tractors 38, railway trucks 17, cement 37. Agricultural output was to increase by 40 per cent above the level of the preceding year (1948). Grain production was to increase by 14.5 per cent (wheat 12 per cent), vegetables by 74 per cent, and industrial plants by 80 per cent. Livestock was to increase by 15 per cent as a whole, but pigs and poultry were to be doubled.

In October 1949 it was announced that the targets for the third quarter of the year had been achieved to the extent of 109 per cent. The most successful industries were lead and copper mining, and some sections of machine-building and chemicals. The building trade was the least successful. A new One-Year Plan was drawn up for 1950. It laid down that crude oil output was to increase by 21 per cent in comparison with 1949, coal by 10 per cent, cast iron by 17 per cent, and steel by 19 per cent.

These plans were all ambitious, and demanded a heavy sacrifice from the population. The rate of investment, as a percentage of national income, was estimated to be 20 per cent for Poland, 16 per cent for Czechoslovakia, 9 per cent for Hungary and 7 per cent for Bulgaria, per year. Production of consumers' goods was sacrificed to capital construction. Even if the results achieved were really as stated by the leaders, the increase in output was not accompanied by an equal increase in standard of living. In all countries it was a matter of simple observation that consumers' goods were much scarcer than before the war. There is no independent means of estimating the accuracy of the official results. The use of percentages, and absence of quantitative figures, in the statements of results, greatly reduces their value. Even if the planned output was achieved to the extent officially claimed, it is probable that quality was sacrificed to quantity. Harassed managers and workers, constantly pressed to complete the demands of the planners, concentrated on numbers at the cost of lower standards. A good deal of the reconstruction of the early

days consisted of improvisation and cannibalisation, often brilliant but of course not permanent. It is uncertain to what extent this was succeeded by real replacement. With these reservations it must be admitted that immense material progress was made. For this the main credit should go to the vitality and endurance of the workers and peasants.

#### THE LONG-TERM PLANS

The first of the long-term plans was the Yugoslav Five-Year Plan, introduced in 1947. The others were announced as the completion of the recovery plans drew near. Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria have Five-Year Plans beginning in 1949, Hungary a Five-Year Plan beginning in 1950, Rumania a Five-Year Plan beginning in 1951, and Poland a Six-Year Plan beginning in 1950.

In these plans, even more than in the recovery plans which preceded them, the emphasis is on industry rather than agriculture, and on capital goods industries rather than consumers' goods industries. Their purpose is stated to be, not to create socialism, but to 'build the foundations of socialism'. As in the Soviet Union, this purpose is to be achieved by industrialisation, and industrialisation is to be achieved by creating heavy industries. The development of already existing lighter industries, though not completely ignored, receives a low priority. Special emphasis is given to engineering and the production of machinery, not only in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, which had some experience in these fields, but also in Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, which had little or none. Production of tractors is stressed in all plans except the Bulgarian, as these are needed in connection with the projected collectivisation of agriculture.

In the first half of 1951, the Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian plans were revised. New, and greatly increased, output targets were set. The change was explained, in the speeches of the communist leaders, by the great progress already made, which exceeded expectations and made possible more ambitious planning. Another interpretation is that these almost simultaneous changes in the three most advanced countries of the area were ordered from Moscow for political reasons. According to this view, the aim was a rapid growth of the industries of greatest potential military importance. The Rumanian Five Year Plan, announced at the beginning of 1951, was on the scale of the revised plans. In Bulgaria increased emphasis was put on agricul-

tural output, and especially on collectivisation of agriculture. It seems likely that the overall planners in Moscow, thinking in terms of immediate needs, were less interested in the ultimate industrialisation of this backward country than in the full exploitation of its agricultural and raw material wealth. The contention of Yugoslav propagandists, that Russia was making Bulgaria a colony, and retarding her industrialisation, may have some foundation. Meanwhile the Yugoslav plan had been badly disorganised by the Cominform blockade, instituted in 1949, and had to be substantially modified.

The figures available for the revised plans are incomplete. There may also be further changes before the end of the plan periods in 1953-1955. Nevertheless the following figures from official sources may give some impression of the planners' general aims. (See note <sup>1</sup> on p. 249).

TABLE I

*Percentage of investments in main branches of economy\**

		Czecho- slovakia†	Hungary	Rumania	Bulgaria	Yugo- slavia
Industry‡	...	41	52	51	40	42
Agriculture	...	8	13	10	17.5	8
Communications		16	12	16	24	26
Building§	...	25	} 16	13	11.5	20
Social Services	...	8				

\* Figures for Poland have not been available.

† Figures for the original plan. As revised in 1951, the percentage for industry will certainly be higher, probably about the same as for Hungary and Rumania.

‡ Including both mining and electrification schemes.

§ This includes (except for Czechoslovakia) social services, and (in all cases) housing and various public works. Housing includes government buildings as well as private dwellings. Social services include not only education but all the various forms of propaganda and 'public enlightenment'.

Certain specific features of each plan deserve brief mention.

The Polish plan originally aimed to increase industrial output to 158 per cent of the 1949 level: the revised plan raised this target to 195 per cent. The corresponding aim for agriculture was increased from 145 per cent to 163 per cent. On completion of the revised plan, the chemical industry is to be the first of Poland's industries, followed by coal mining. The share of capital goods

TABLE II

*Output Targets in Certain Industries*

(Figures in brackets show the planned output in the last year of the plan as a percentage of the output at the beginning of the plan period)

		Poland*	Czechoslovakia	Hungary	Rumania	Bulgaria	Yugoslavia§
Coal (millions of tons)	...	100 (133)	21 (118)†	—	—	—	—
Brown coal and lignite (millions of tons)	...	—	32 (135)†	27.5 (250)	} 8.5 (238)	} 6.5 (163)	} 16.5 (272)
Steel (millions of tons)	...	4.6 (201)	3.5 (133)†	2.2 (230)			
Electric power (milliards of Kw)...	...	19.3 (236)	11.2 (149)†	4.2 (191)†	4.7	1.8 (221)	4.4 (395)
Nitrogen fertilisers (thousand tons)	...	980 (240)†	214 (134)†	310 (462)†	—	} 40†	} 350 (481)
Superphosphate fertilisers (thousand tons)	...	878 (200)†	399 (103)†	330 (273)†	—		
Tractors (units)	...	11,000 (400)	20,000 (222)†	4,600 (177)†	5,000†	—	1,500†

\* Comparisons refer to present boundaries.

† Unrevised plan figures. Czechoslovak coal (black and brown together) is to increase by 20 per cent more than these figures. Czechoslovak chemicals (which include fertilisers) by 30 per cent more. The revised targets for electric power and chemicals in Hungary are about double the original targets.

‡ No production of these in the past.

§ Comparisons are with the 1939 output.

industries in total industrial production, which was 59 per cent in 1949, is to be 63·5 per cent in 1955. A new steel-mill with a capacity of 1,500,000 tons is to be completed within the plan period. The plant is to be imported from the U.S.S.R. Within the period the construction of a second great steel-mill is to begin in eastern Poland. The sugar industry, one of Poland's oldest branches, is to have in 1955 an output of 1·1 million tons. The number of workers in industry in 1955 is to be one million more than in 1949, and 690,000 of the new workers are to be skilled.<sup>2</sup> Polish agriculture is to be supplied with 61,000 tractors, from home or foreign production, during the plan period. In 1955 25 per cent of agricultural output is to be produced by state farms, and of the remaining 75 per cent more than half is to come from collective farms. Industry will also be geographically redistributed. New factories will be set up in areas hitherto purely agricultural, and rebuilt Warsaw will be an important centre for the metal, electro-technical and clothing industries.

The chief feature of the Czechoslovak Five-Year Plan is enormous development of heavy industry, to the comparative neglect of the light industries and consumers' goods industries which were so important in pre-war Czechoslovakia. This may be explained partly by the fact that the workers in the latter industries were largely German, expelled after 1945, and still more by the fact that their products were previously sold in the West European

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the sources quoted above (p. 241, footnote 2) the following have also been used:—Doreen Warriner, *Revolution in Eastern Europe*, London, 1950; Hungarian law for the amendment of the Plan, introduced to the National Assembly by Gero on 15th May 1951; Speech by Minc to the Central Committee of the United Workers Party Polish on 15th July 1950; Article by V. Karra on the Rumanian Five-Year Plan in *Vnyeshnyaya Torgovlya*, Moscow, No. 2, 1951; Article by Dr. M. Zd'arsky in *Statistický obzor*, Prague, June 1951, entitled 'Zvyšujeme úkoly petiletky' ('Let us raise the tasks of the Five-Year Plan'). As a comparison with the output figures in Table II, it may be useful to give here the coal and steel output in various countries outside Eastern Europe, together with the more advanced East European countries. They are taken from the *Economic Survey of Europe in 1950*, published by E.C.E. of U.N., and refer to 1950 output.

	Crude Steel	Hard Coal
	(millions of tons)	
Belgium-Luxemburg ...	6·2	27·3
France (with Saar) ...	10·6	65·9
Western Germany ...	12·1	112·3
United Kingdom...	16·6	219·7
United States ...	87·7	504·6
Czechoslovakia ...	2·9	18·5
Hungary ...	1·0	—
Poland ...	2·5	77·8

<sup>2</sup> Statement by Nowak, a member of the Politburo of the Polish United Workers' Party, at a session of the Central Committee 15th July 1951.

and overseas markets. The new plan is intended deliberately to tie the Czechoslovak economy more closely to those of the Soviet Union and the 'popular democracies' and to weaken economic ties with the West. This change may well be the main reason for the February 1948 communist police revolution. The non-communist parties were all prepared to co-operate closely in foreign policy with the U.S.S.R., but they were sceptical about the wisdom of transforming the economy on the ground of a demand from the East for capital goods which might not be lasting. It was probably in order to overcome this opposition to their economic aims that the Soviet leaders approved a seizure of power by the communists which was not required merely by diplomatic considerations. This tendency of the Czechoslovak plan became still more apparent after the revision announced in February 1951.

Under the original plan, total investments were to have been 336 milliard crowns ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  times those of the completed Two-Year Plan: under the revised plan they are to be 558 milliard. Under the revised plan the target for heavy industry was raised from 170 per cent of the 1948 level to 230 per cent. The new target for heavy engineering is 48 per cent higher than that originally planned, for coal 20 per cent higher and for chemicals 30 per cent higher. The industrial labour force is to increase by 550,000—about twice the number originally planned. The development of Slovakia was emphasised in the original plan, and still more in the revised plan. The creation of heavy industrial plants in Slovakia, and the transfer eastwards of a part of Bohemian industry, can be justified rather by military than by economic considerations.

The investments under the Hungarian Five-Year Plan were originally to have been nearly 51 milliard florint, more than five times the amount invested in the completed Three-Year Plan: under the revised plan, announced in the early summer of 1951, the sum was raised to 85 milliard. The targets for chemicals and electric power were almost doubled, those for machine production were trebled. The industrial labour force was to increase not by 480,000 as originally proposed but by 650,000. At the same time it was claimed that the productivity of labour would rise not by 50 per cent as originally proposed but by 100 per cent. It was also claimed that the standard of living would rise by 50 per cent instead of 35 per cent.

The Rumanian Five-Year Plan, announced at the end of 1950, was equally ambitious. The industrial labour force was to rise during the plan period by 38 per cent to a total of 3 million.

Productivity of labour in industry was to increase by 75 per cent and the standard of living by 80 per cent. The oil industry was to produce 10 million tons in 1955. Even if the most rapacious methods were used, to the irreparable harm of the industry in future, it seems doubtful whether this target can be achieved. At the end of the period, Rumania was to have become a predominantly industrial country. Special stress was laid on the industrialisation of regions hitherto almost lacking in industry—Moldavia Oltenia and Dobrudja, and the northern corner of Transylvania. The total investment under the plan is to be 1330 milliard lei.

The Bulgarian Five-Year Plan proposes a total investment of 425 milliard leva, more than seven times as much as under the completed Two-Year Plan. Its completion is intended to change the relationship of industrial to agricultural production from 30: 70 in 1948 to 45: 55 in 1953. The number of industrial workers is to increase by 138,000. Mining and electric power are stressed. New industrial enterprises are to include non-ferrous metallurgical works and the construction of machines never yet produced in the country. In agriculture special attention is paid to industrial crops. An important feature of the Plan was the intention to extend the area under collective farms so that these would produce in 1953 60 per cent of Bulgaria's agricultural output.<sup>1</sup>

Starting from the ruins left by war and civil war, in a country where industry had made little progress before the war, the planners of Yugoslavia aimed to achieve by 1951 an industrial output more than three times that of 1939 and an agricultural output more than half as large again as in 1939. The share of industry in national production in 1939 was estimated by the planners, somewhat optimistically, as 45 per cent: in 1951 it was to be 64 per cent. To attain this result, 27 per cent of the national income would have to be invested every year. High priority was given to electric power, based on the country's great resources of water power. Ambitious public works include the irrigation of areas such as Lonsko Polje in Croatia, the draining of Lake Scutari and measures against flooding in the Danube, Tisza, Sava and Morava valleys.

This plan could hardly have been achieved even under the most favourable conditions. But conditions were not favourable. In 1946 and 1947 there were severe droughts. In 1949 the Cominform states blockaded Yugoslavia, depriving her of raw materials

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 272-7.

and machines on which vital parts of the plan depended. Not only were materials insufficient, but it was discovered that the planners' original estimates of the labour force available had been unduly optimistic. According to a competent observer the estimate of 350,000 skilled workers, made in 1946, should be divided by ten.<sup>1</sup> The few skilled or semi-skilled workers had to be moved from place to place according to changing priorities, often leaving large-scale projects unfinished. The available machinery quickly deteriorated for lack of proper care. Successes were achieved in the manufacture by skilled craftsmen of prototypes of complicated modern machines, but there was no prospect of putting these into mass production within the foreseeable future. Even the mining industry, for which there was previous experience to guide, fared badly. According to Yugoslav press statements, the Bor copper mines at the end of 1949 were producing only 55-70 per cent of the plan target. That conditions in the timber industry were desperate, was admitted by Kidrić and Kardelj in speeches to the Executive Committee of the People's Front in January 1950. On 28th December 1950 Kidrić told the parliament that it had been decided to prolong the plan period by one year, till the end of 1952, and thereafter to have no further five-year plan.

During 1951 there was much public discussion in Yugoslavia of the faults of the Soviet system of planning, which it was admitted had been uncritically imitated. Measures were introduced to decentralise economic control. Powers were devolved from the central to the republican governments, and from these to the managements of factories. Managers were to find their own raw materials, machines and spare parts, within the country or abroad. Prices of basic raw materials were still to be fixed by the central authorities, but the prices of the finished products would be left to supply and demand. Factory managements would be given production quotas in money value, not specific output targets. They would thus be able to decide between the claims of quality and quantity. They would have to sell their goods in competition with other firms. They would also be able to decide how to spend their profits between such rival claims as reinvestment, workers' houses and wage bonuses.<sup>2</sup>

It still remained the avowed intention to complete the original plan in 1952. It appeared however that the plan had undergone silent but far-reaching revision. Some projects, such as large-scale

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 5th January 1950.

<sup>2</sup> For reorganisation of factory management in Yugoslavia, see below, p. 281.

manufacture of locomotives and bicycles, had been abandoned. Responsible officials admitted that there was no prospect of achieving the target of 450,000 tons of crude oil from the oil-field in Slavonia. On the other hand electrification targets were actually increased.

The plan had aimed at industrialising the backward regions. The most rapid rate was to be in Macedonia, which was to become an important centre of electric power and to have a large textile industry, an iron foundry and factories producing soap, concrete prefabricated products and tinned fruit and vegetables. Bosnia was to become a centre of metallurgy, based on coal and iron ore, of which it has some deposits. Mostar, the picturesque Turkish garrison town in Hercegovina, was to be the centre of a new aluminium industry. As steps towards these results, important railways have been constructed. The Bosnian iron ore district of Ljubija has been linked with the railway system. The first half of a standard gauge north-to-south line through Bosnia has been completed, from Šamac to Sarajevo. It is hoped to connect Sarajevo by standard gauge line with the Adriatic by the end of 1951, and to electrify this whole line from a new power station at Jablanica, in the precipitous mountain valley of the river Neretva.

Albania's economy was for three years dependent on that of Yugoslavia. The Albanian-Yugoslav economic treaty of November 1946 provided for co-ordination of the economic plans of the two countries, adjustment of the currency values, circulation and price levels, and a Yugoslav guarantee that sufficient goods would be in circulation to maintain the purchasing power of the two currencies at the agreed rate of exchange. Albanian-Yugoslav joint companies were created, similar to the Soviet-Rumanian and Soviet-Hungarian companies. These joint companies covered railway building, diesel oil production, electrification, mining, shipping and an Albanian-Yugoslav bank. The capital contribution of each was to be equal, and each was to have an equal vote on the directing boards. For a year and a half Yugoslav-Albanian economic relations were outwardly excellent. Then the Tito-Cominform breach gave the Albanian government a chance to break an association that had evidently been irksome to it.

At the Albanian Communist Party congress in November 1948 a new Two-Year Plan was announced for 1949-50. According to the congress speaker Gogo Nushi, progress had been made since the war despite Yugoslav interference. Mining output in 1948 was 121 per cent of the 1938 level, and the cultivated area was 119 per

cent. Under the new plan, cereal output was to be increased 68 per cent beyond the 1948 level. A new hydro-electric power station was to be built, and a sugar refinery, a large textile factory and a large tannery were to be set up. The cement output by 1950 was to be 160 per cent of 1948. The most important mining increases were to be in petrol (1950 output to five times that of 1948), copper ore (six times), chrome ore (thirty times) and brown coal (one hundred times). The output figures for 1948, which are not given in the report, were presumably very small. But the proposed pace of development is at least superficially impressive. Its achievement would be ensured, official spokesmen stressed, by the help of Soviet raw materials, machinery and technicians.

These far-reaching plans strike the imagination. Even a foreign observer cannot fail to be affected by the enthusiasm and optimism of the planners. Moreover it is certain that large-scale industrialisation, public works and mechanisation of agriculture are the right remedies for the rural over-population and poverty, and the lack of manufactured goods, which were so striking in the old Eastern Europe. It is also understandable that the new regimes should wish, from a general feeling of patriotism, to diminish their countries' economic dependence on foreign countries.

But it would be a grave mistake to assume that because these aims have been set down on paper they will necessarily be achieved. It is still less certain that they will be achieved in the best way. Two features call for brief comment here.

One is that all the plans aim to create similar industries. It is true that the south-eastern countries are so deficient in heavy industry that it will be a long time before their needs can be satisfied. It is also true that between the two most advanced countries, Czechoslovakia and Poland, attempts are being made to co-ordinate plans. In particular the power resources of the Silesian industrial basin are to be to some extent pooled. There are also major construction schemes of benefit to several countries, such as the Oder-Danube canal in Czechoslovakia, and the Danube-Black Sea canal in Rumania. Both would facilitate trade throughout the whole area between the Baltic and Black Seas. As long as the Soviet leaders think in terms of military preparations against the West, and are able to impose their will in Eastern Europe, the demand for the products of heavy industry is likely to exceed the supply. But these conditions will not last for ever. The danger that the plans will ultimately lead to wasteful competition between the East European countries, and to over-production

in heavy industry, though improbable in the immediate future, cannot be lightly dismissed for further ahead.

The second feature of the plans is the comparative neglect of consumers' goods industries. It is of course true that a much sounder foundation of capital goods industries is needed than Eastern Europe possessed before the war, and that the region's natural resources can be far more thoroughly exploited for this purpose than hitherto. It is also true that the consumers' goods industries are to make considerable progress under the plans, and that the official statements declare that the standard of living will greatly increase. But estimates of standard of living are difficult and controversial. The experience of the short-term recovery plans already carried out, and of the successive Five-Year Plans in the U.S.S.R., suggest that in practice whenever adjustments have to be made it is the consumers' goods industries that are scrapped. The standard of living, as revealed in the observation by unbiased witnesses of obvious objects of everyday life, has not improved so notably as was promised. It is possible to attribute this to bad luck—to drought, or 'capitalistic encirclement'. But the fact remains that there have been and are likely to be disappointments, and that in the face of disappointments the planners will not sacrifice their capital construction plans but will ask for further sacrifices from the people.

The percentage figures of plan fulfilment, officially released at more or less regular intervals by the governments, are meaningless as there is no way of discovering on what the percentages are really based. But enough information is available to show that the waste of materials, machines, working time and skill, and the production of goods of miserable quality, well known features of Soviet planning, are occurring in Eastern Europe. The familiar dilemma of the Soviet planner—to be unmasked as a saboteur today for planning a target too low for the taste of the political bosses, or to be unmasked as a saboteur next year for not fulfilling the impossible target which he set in order to please the political bosses—increasingly confronts the planner in Eastern Europe. Only Yugoslavia has turned her back on this witches' sabbath, and where her retreat will end is not yet clear.

In any case, the fulfilment of the plans depends on the supply of labour, raw materials and industrial equipment. The first of these depends on the organisation of the peasants, workers and technicians, which will be considered in the next chapter. The second and third factors depend on the organisation of international trade.

## FOREIGN TRADE PROBLEMS

The development of the foreign trade of the East European countries since the war falls roughly into three periods.

In the first period, which lasted until perhaps the middle of 1946, exports were extremely small, and a minimum of imports were essential to get the dislocated economies into motion at all. Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia received free imports from U.N.R.R.A. and imports on loan from the Soviet Union. Albania depended entirely on U.N.R.R.A., and Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria almost entirely on the U.S.S.R.

In the second stage, as communications were restored and business contacts resumed, trade developed in various directions. Czechoslovakia and Poland greatly increased their trade with the West. For Rumania and Hungary, which had to deliver a large part of their production as reparations to the U.S.S.R., trade with other markets was difficult, but Hungary was able appreciably to increase her trade with Western Europe. Bulgaria continued to depend on trade with the U.S.S.R. This was due partly to Soviet political and military domination, but also to the fact that Bulgaria had previously been more dependent on the German market than any other country of the region, and was now therefore more isolated.

The third stage began with the refusal in August 1947, at Soviet dictation, of Marshall Aid. Having forced its satellites to reject Western help, the Soviet government had to increase its own trade with all the East European countries. Thus after the autumn of 1947, the U.S.S.R. continued to dominate the foreign trade of Bulgaria and Rumania, while her share in the trade of the other countries increased. With each of the East European states she concluded trade pacts for several years (usually five). It should be stressed, however, that each year the pacts are reinterpreted. It does not follow that the original long-term targets for mutual trade will be exactly fulfilled, either in quantity or in types of goods exchanged. In 1948 the Council for Mutual Economic Aid (or 'Comecon') was formed to co-ordinate the trade of the 'popular democracies' with each other and with the U.S.S.R. Little is known of its workings. It seems, however, that its main task has been to organise the boycott of Yugoslavia by Cominform countries, which has substantially modified the pattern of trade in Eastern Europe.

The most important trade pacts concluded between East

European countries and the U.S.S.R. were the Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement of December 1947 and the Soviet-Polish agreement of January 1948.<sup>1</sup> Both provided for an exchange, over a five-year period, to the value of U.S. dollars 1000 million. The chief Soviet export to Czechoslovakia was grain. Czechoslovak exports to the U.S.S.R. were to include machinery, oil piping, chemicals, clothing and sugar. To Poland the Soviet exports were to consist mainly of ores, oil products, raw cotton, motor vehicles and tractors. Poland was to export coal, coke, textiles, railway rolling stock, steel, sugar and cement. In addition, a Soviet credit of U.S. dollars 450 million was granted for the purchase of the steel mill projected under the Six-Year Plan<sup>1</sup> and other industrial plant. With the other Cominform states the Soviet government has not concluded long-term trade agreements. The volume of trade has been decided from year to year. The U.S.S.R. has dominated Bulgarian and Rumanian trade since the war. Hungary's trade with the U.S.S.R. has notably increased since an agreement of October 1948.

The only important long-term agreement between a Cominform state and a Western country is the Anglo-Polish agreement of January 1949. This provided for a five-year total exchange of £130 million—about half the value of the Soviet-Polish agreement. Polish exports were to consist mainly of bacon, eggs and poultry, timber and furniture. Britain was to send rubber, semi-manufactured copper goods and tropical foodstuffs. It is worth noting that fulfilment by Poland of this treaty requires a considerable improvement in pig-breeding, which is the weakest point in Polish agriculture. If the agreement is to be fulfilled, it is unlikely that the Polish government will risk dislocating agriculture by the mass collectivisation of peasant farms. Czechoslovakia and Hungary still have some trade with the West, especially with politically neutral Switzerland and Sweden.<sup>2</sup>

Yugoslavia's largest customer in the immediate post-war years was the U.S.S.R., with whom she made a comprehensive one-year

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> The British government broke off commercial relations with Hungary at the beginning of 1950 in connection with the arrest of the British business-man Mr. Edgar Sanders on charges of espionage. The British objection was not to the fact of arrest as such but to the refusal to allow the prisoner to see the British consul and to the methods of preparation of the 'trial'. An American subject, Mr. Vogeler, was 'tried' at the same time. After receiving, like Sanders, a long prison sentence, he was released by the Hungarian government after the United States government had made substantial economic concessions to Hungary. The man-hunt and the ransome have thus become regular methods of popular-democratic trade diplomacy.

trade agreement in July 1947. Important agreements were also made with Czechoslovakia in 1946 and with Hungary in 1947. There was also some trade with Italy, Holland, Switzerland and Sweden.

With the Tito-Cominform breach of June 1948 Yugoslavia's trade relations with the Cominform countries suffered. Agreement was eventually reached with the U.S.S.R. for a very much smaller exchange of goods. Negotiations with Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, all of whom were expected to contribute valuable machinery or industrial raw materials, came to a standstill in the summer of 1949.<sup>1</sup> Yugoslavia was forced to seek more trade with the West, at the cost of giving plausibility to the repeated accusation from Cominform sources that the Tito clique was becoming a tool of the 'imperialists'. A temporary Anglo-Yugoslav agreement in December 1948 was followed a year later by a five-year Anglo-Yugoslav agreement providing for an exchange of goods to the value of £100 million. The chief Yugoslav export was to be timber. British exports were to include raw wool, wool and cotton yarns, and machinery. Yugoslavia also greatly increased her trade with the United States and with Germany. The first comprehensive foreign trade figures published by the Yugoslav government since the war, appeared early in 1951 and showed the following changes.

*Yugoslavia's Chief Trade Partners 1947-50*

	Percentage of Yugoslavia's imports coming from		Percentage of Yugoslavia's exports going to	
	1947	1950	1947	1950
U.S.S.R. ...	21.1	—	16.5	—
Czechoslovakia ...	18.2	—	18	—
Hungary ...	9	—	8.4	—
Italy ...	9	10.4	11.4	11.6
United Kingdom	5.1	16.9	2.7	18.7
United States ...	4.1	21.7	2	13.5
West Germany ...	—	16.5	—	12.4
Austria ...	—	7.7	—	10.8

<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian government denounced the Hungarian-Yugoslav trade agreement of 1947 on 18 June 1949. The Polish government informed the Yugoslav government of its intention to stop all deliveries to Yugoslavia on 7 June 1949. Czechoslovakia stopped all deliveries on 12 June 1949. Though the action of all three was officially motivated by Yugoslav failure to deliver, its real reason was political.

Considerable credits were also granted to Yugoslavia by the Western Powers. Between the breach with the Cominform and April 1951 she received, in credits or grants, from the United States 190 million dollars and from Britain £25 million. These however were still insufficient for her needs. At the end of April 1951 she asked for a further U.S. dollars 180 million. In June it was announced that a joint U.S.-British-French grant of £50 million would be made.

After the breach of economic relations with Yugoslavia in 1948, Albania, which had not a single friendly neighbour, was dependent for essential imports on sea communications with the Soviet Union, Poland, Rumania and Bulgaria. Some supplies have certainly reached the country from these states, through the Straits of Gibraltar and the Dardanelles. As Albania has little to offer them, it would seem that they are subsidising her for political reasons.<sup>1</sup> This primitive tribal and pseudo-feudal country is well on its way to becoming a Russian colony. It may, however, derive considerable material benefits from this.

The place which was held in East European trade by Germany has now been largely taken by the Soviet Union. In the decade 1934-44 the tendency was for the whole region to become incorporated in a German *Grossraumwirtschaft* directed by the Nazi Ministers of Economics Schacht and Funk. The region was to produce what was convenient for the German economy, and trade both within the region and between it and the rest of the world was to be subject to German approval. To-day the trend is towards the incorporation of the whole region in the Soviet economy. Trade within the region, especially between the more advanced Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary and the less advanced countries to the south-east, is encouraged. Soviet exports to the region are for the most part raw materials: the place of Germany as a supplier of machinery and heavy equipment is being taken rather by western Poland and Czechoslovakia, to which may in time be added the eastern zone of Germany. The U.S.S.R. has replaced Germany not so much in the type of goods it supplies as in the proportion of trade which it secures.

But even trade within the region is not unreservedly encouraged by the Soviet government. If ideological factors oppose it, it will be prevented, as the case of heretical Yugoslavia shows. An important difference between the position of the U.S.S.R. in Eastern

<sup>1</sup> According to Radio Tirana (21 June 1949) Albania's imports for 1949 were estimated at a value of 2,480 million lek, her exports at only 890 million lek.

Europe's trade to-day and that of Germany ten years ago is that economic connections are far more strongly and rigidly reinforced by ideological links than was ever the case even with the most fascist of Germany's dependent governments.

Like German trade in the thirties, Soviet trade to-day has both beneficial and harmful aspects for Eastern Europe.

Germany offered for East European foodstuffs and raw materials prices well above world market levels, and so raised the cost of these products that they could no longer compete in other markets. Then the Germans were able to exploit this dependence on them to demand new exchange rates to the advantage of the Reichsmark, and to impose high prices for their own exports. Soviet price policy is covered in secrecy. Exchanges are announced to the world in terms of the categories of goods to be delivered on each side, and it is usually stated that they are priced 'on the basis of world prices'. In the first period after 'liberation' Soviet goods were certainly overpriced and those of Eastern Europe underpriced. By the Soviet-Polish agreement of September 1945 very large quantities of Polish coal had to be delivered to the U.S.S.R. at one-tenth of the price then offered by Denmark.<sup>1</sup> Since then the quantity required has been reduced, and the price may have been raised. The revelations of Yugoslav spokesmen since the Cominform-Tito quarrel have shown that Yugoslav goods were underpriced and Soviet goods overpriced in the earlier Soviet-Yugoslav trade agreements. Another trick formerly used by the Germans—to re-export to 'hard currency' countries at higher prices goods bought in Eastern Europe—has also been practised by the U.S.S.R., for instance with Bulgarian rose-water.

Some well-informed observers believe that the extortion tactics of the first period were largely due to suspicion and inexperience, and that they are now changing for the better. They argue that the Soviet negotiators are finding that such behaviour simply does not pay, in fact that it is a mistake to kill a goose that lays a golden egg. How swift and how great this improvement will be remains an open question. One must not forget that the East European communist trade negotiators are dealing, when they visit Moscow for trade talks, with their hierarchical superiors in a highly disciplined world organisation. It is notoriously difficult for a sergeant to argue with a general.

Another former German abuse was to force East European

<sup>1</sup> Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination*, pp. 158-9.

countries to buy goods of little value to them. The most important category were armaments, usually not of the latest type. As spare parts would have to be got from the same source, this increased the countries' political dependence on the Reich. There were also the consignments of fountain-pens, mouth-organs and aspirins which received so much publicity in the thirties. But imports from Germany also of course included valuable machinery, transport equipment, chemicals and metallurgical goods. Between 1934 and 1938 imports of German machinery into Rumania increased eight times, and into Yugoslavia four times. Machinery formed between two-thirds and three-quarters of exports from Germany to both Hungary and Bulgaria in 1936.<sup>1</sup>

Soviet exports to Eastern Europe also consist mainly of useful goods, especially coke, ores, raw cotton, agricultural machinery, vehicles and oil products. But goods of less obvious productive value are also sent in large quantities. First among these come armaments, whose supply has of course exactly the same political aims and consequences as in the period of German predominance. A parallel for the mouth-organs may be found in the flood of Soviet literature—mainly political—and films. The Germans did not attempt to drive Western films from East European cinemas until they were at war with the Western Powers. In Eastern Europe to-day the drive against Western contemporary culture of all kinds is one of the first duties of the communist parties: it is extremely lucrative to the Soviet cinema and publishing trusts, which are well on their way to acquiring a monopoly. It would be interesting to know how much the East European states have had to pay, in exports of good produce, for copies of Stalin's masterpiece, the *Short History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)*, published in their own languages in Moscow, or for the right to publish in their own country translations of this work, of the works of Lenin and Stalin, of vast editions of Gorki and of much smaller but considerable editions of Russian classics. There is absolutely no comparison here with Germany. In the thirties there was a genuine demand for German technical and scientific works in Eastern Europe, but Nazi ideological literature was hardly obtainable outside the Reich, except perhaps among some of the German minorities. It would also be interesting to know how much is paid for the tens of millions of photographs of Stalin, and the hundreds of thousands of photographs of other

<sup>1</sup> See article by Krugmann in *Deutscher Volkswirt* (Berlin) of 31 March 1939; G. Grdjić in *Affaires danubiennes* (Bucarest), March 1939.

members of the Soviet Politburo, and what proportion of the raw cotton imported from the U.S.S.R. has to be used to manufacture the Soviet flags which on public holidays adorn almost every house and are carried by children and adults in official processions.

The Germans acquired important investments in Eastern Europe by political pressure, for instance under the German-Rumanian trade treaty of 1939 which provided for 'joint economic planning', and by the transference of Jewish-owned enterprises to members of the German minorities. The Soviet government has done with German-owned property what the Germans did with Jewish-owned. Moreover 'German property' has been widely interpreted so as to include former Allied property which the Germans forced the French or Belgian owners to sell to them during the war. The U.S.S.R. cancelled the huge outstanding debts of Germany to the ex-German satellite countries, but demanded full payment to herself of their debts to Germany, and then 'generously' consented to accept only a part. Soviet-Rumanian and Soviet-Hungarian joint companies have been formed, in which the Soviet contribution consists of former German assets in the branch of production in question and the contribution of the Rumanian or Hungarian government consists of further resources in the same branch. Such companies monopolise air and river transport in both countries, and control most of Hungary's bauxite and a large part of Rumania's petrol and timber. Even in ex-Allied countries the Soviet authorities control important resources, such as the Jachymov uranium mines in Czechoslovakia.

There is, however, one very important difference between German and Soviet economic policy towards Eastern Europe. German demand for East European foodstuffs and raw materials in the thirties saved these countries from the slump, and restored them to relative prosperity on the same economic foundations which they had had before the slump. It is not true that Germany tried to destroy their industries: rather she sought to encourage such branches as were based on local resources, and to avoid competition with branches which were better developed in Germany. Even this attitude was modified during the war, when industries were even transferred from the Reich to Eastern Europe to escape Allied bombing. But it is true that the Germans showed no interest in creating enormous new industries on quite different lines throughout Eastern Europe. This the Soviet Union is doing. As a great development of industry is the only hope of curing the

rural over-population and growing poverty which were the curse of pre-war Eastern Europe, it may be argued that Soviet economic policy, unlike pre-war German, serves the interests of the East European peoples.

This is a serious argument. Russia provides a vast and almost insatiable market. Already before 1914 the industry of central and southern Poland—of Łódź, Warsaw and the Dombrowa basin—thrived on trade with the Russian interior.<sup>1</sup> Polish industry derived great benefit from Russian expansion in Asia. The prospects for Bohemian trade with Russia also looked good. The panslavism of the Pole Dmowski and the Czech Kramar<sup>2</sup> had a sound business basis. Between the world wars the whole of Eastern Europe was cut off from this market—by the reluctance of the U.S.S.R. as well as by the prejudice of the East European ruling classes to which communists now exclusively attribute it. It is not surprising that to-day the imagination of many should be fired by the vision of one great Eurasian economy stretching from Canton to Petsamo and from Jena to Shanghai.

It is, however, not enough that the U.S.S.R. should be willing to take the products of Eastern Europe: it is necessary also that she should give in exchange. There are raw materials and machinery which the U.S.S.R. cannot supply to Eastern Europe. These must be obtained from Western Europe or from outside Europe. It is to the economic interest of the U.S.S.R. that her satellites should trade for these things with the West. Against this must be set, in the Soviet view, the danger of cultural and political contamination by contact with the West, whose influence is in any case deeply rooted already. There are other raw materials and industrial equipment which the U.S.S.R. can supply, but which are also needed by her own industry. As the latter grows, it may become more difficult to spare them for Eastern Europe. This is one reason why the expansion of heavy industry in Eastern Europe may lead to surplus capacity in the future.

The main dangers in the growing dependence of Eastern Europe on the U.S.S.R. are, however, political. Owing to the nature of the new regimes, and the nature of international communist organisation, the centre of political command lies in Moscow, and the apparatus for securing obedience exists. Moreover the standard of living of the Soviet peoples is far below that of their East

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Rosa Luxemburg, *Die industrielle Entwicklung Polens*, published in 1899.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 24.

European neighbours. Thus, quite apart from ideological discipline, appeals by East European leaders for the maintenance of what in Moscow must seem an unjustifiable degree of bourgeois comfort are not likely to meet with sympathy from the Soviet leaders. Domination by any foreign power is an unpleasant thing, but if the standard of living of the dominant power is lower than that of the subject country, the plight of the dominated is particularly bad.

The prospects of West-East trade are not bright. The chief obstacles are political. The Western Powers, and especially the United States, are understandably unwilling to sell to the Soviet Union or her satellites goods which could in any way strengthen their war potential. It is not easy to decide what goods fall into this category. The only satisfactory approach is a periodic empirical balance of risk with advantage.

But there are also longer-term economic obstacles. Apologists of the Communist regimes like to talk as if a vast volume of trade with Eastern Europe is ready to hand as soon as the Western nations choose to enjoy it, but that this is withheld from them by the wicked men of Wall Street. The truth is different. The demand of the eastern countries for western products, especially for industrial raw materials and machines, is indeed great, but their ability to offer the West products equally attractive is more doubtful. Their best raw materials are required by the U.S.S.R. Of foodstuffs they still have a surplus. But as their urban populations increase, the surplus available for export will diminish. If the official promises of a better standard of living even approach fulfilment, it will diminish very quickly. Trade cannot be one-sided. It is not the fact of industrialisation that makes East-West trade unlikely: on the contrary, trade between industrial countries is perfectly possible. The economic limiting factors are the type of industrialisation adopted by the communists, and the Soviet grip on Eastern Europe's economic resources.

## CHAPTER TEN

### SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS POLICY

#### THE PEASANTS

THE agrarian policy of the new regimes has generally followed that of the Soviet Union. They began with the distribution of large estates among the peasants. Then came a transitional stage, corresponding to some extent to the 'N.E.P.' period in the U.S.S.R. During this period the governments' main concern was to organise a more efficient and centralised system of exchange between town and village. The main features were quotas for deliveries of crops, changes in taxation, and the establishment of state-owned co-operative shops in the countryside. Preparations were also made for the mechanisation of agriculture. The third stage has only just begun in the greater part of Eastern Europe. It is the stage of 'liquidation of the kulaks' and collectivisation of agriculture.

Far the most important of the post-war land reforms was the Hungarian. According to a 1935 survey, holdings of more than 100 Hungarian acres, amounting to 0.8 per cent of the total number of holdings, possessed 48 per cent of the land, while 93 per cent of the holdings (those of less than 20 acres) possessed only 32 per cent. As a result of the land reform, which was begun in half of Hungary at the beginning of 1945, and extended to the rest of the country as soon as the Germans had been driven out, the share of holdings under 20 acres was raised to 65 per cent. Figures published in 1947 show 20 per cent as still belonging to holdings above 100 acres, but this figure includes state-owned forests. No private large estates remained. The land seized under the reform amounted to 3,222,000 hectares. Of this 26 per cent was forest land retained by the state, 7 per cent was pasture land also retained, and 9 per cent was put to miscellaneous uses. The remainder, 58 per cent of the confiscated land, was redistributed to private persons. Claimants were landless labourers and small-holders with too little land to support their families. 663,359 claimants received some land. This reform indeed transformed

Hungarian agriculture, and was an event of great political as well as economic importance.<sup>1</sup>

In Poland, too, land reform was overdue. But the issue was complicated by the post-war changes of frontier. The parts of pre-war Poland where large estates had been most dominant were annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939 and again in 1944. Nevertheless considerable areas belonging to big landowners remained in the central and western regions of the old Poland. The Lublin Committee in September 1944 announced the confiscation of large estates, and the process was continued when the rest of the country was cleared of Germans. According to figures published in 1947, the amount seized was more than 3,000,000 hectares, of which nearly 1,000,000 was forest land, which the state took over. There remained 2,131,284 hectares for redistribution. Of this 465,614 hectares were given to agricultural schools, research stations and other state agricultural enterprises. Of the remainder, by the summer of 1947, 1,125,000 hectares had been given to 379,000 claimants who had too little land or none at all.<sup>2</sup> But far the most important source of new land in Poland were the western provinces annexed from Germany. Of the 5,500,000 Poles who had settled in this territory up to the end of 1948, 2,500,000 came from central Poland, from districts of rural over-population.

In Czechoslovakia, too, expropriation of Germans formed the main basis of land reform. The expulsion of more than 2,000,000 Germans from the western border provinces provided 2,600,000 hectares of land, of which 1,650,000 were arable and the rest forest. Of the confiscated arable land, 1,300,000 hectares were distributed among 127,500 new owners, of whom two-fifths were smallholders with too little land and the rest were landless labourers. A small land reform was also carried out in Slovakia. A little less than 300,000 hectares were seized, of which about 100,000 each from Hungarians, from Slovak 'collaborators' and from the German minority.<sup>3</sup>

Of the Balkan land reforms, relatively the most important was in Albania. It was estimated that before the war one-third of the fertile land of the country belonged to some 200 landowners. A land reform planned in 1930 had not been carried out. In the mountainous districts smallholders wrung a living from small

<sup>1</sup> U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis paper No. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination*, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> Diamond, *Czechoslovakia between West and East*.

plots of poor land, and in the fertile areas there was a class of landless labourers. The new regime therefore in August 1945 confiscated all holdings of more than 20 hectares, with the reservation that on properties where 'advanced methods' were used 40 hectares might be kept.<sup>1</sup> Private forest land was taken by the state, and some arable was given to state farms and agricultural schools. According to a statement by Premier Enver Hoxha to the congress of the Albanian Communist Party in November 1948, 320,000 hectares were divided among 60,000 peasant families.

In Rumania the great estates had been destroyed by the land reform of 1918, but in the following twenty years land had again changed hands. By 1944 there was a substantial class of big land-owners, owning a quantity of land which, though far smaller than in 1918, was still worth redistributing. The new land reform of 1945, by confiscating this land, acquired a total of 1,423,145 hectares. Of this the state kept 329,048 for its various agricultural enterprises, while 1,094,097 were given to 828,853 peasants. About half those who received land were smallholders and half landless labourers. More than 200,000 more claimants, though officially declared entitled to receive land, could not be provided for.<sup>2</sup>

In Yugoslavia 392,000 hectares were confiscated from the German minority in Voivodina and Slavonia. Of this 280,000 were used for the colonisation of 50,000 peasants from devastated areas, especially of those who had served in the partisan forces during the war. Land acquired from other sources, by the confiscation of church properties of more than 10 hectares and of private arable land above 35 hectares, was of small dimensions.<sup>3</sup> In Bulgaria it was decided to confiscate the property of absentees and collaborators, and all private land above 20 hectares. It was hoped thus to obtain 450,000 hectares, but the amount actually available was only 150,000.<sup>4</sup>

The land reforms removed social injustices and destroyed the remnants of a social class which was the traditional enemy of the left, but they did not solve economic problems. One of the most urgent tasks of the new regimes was to assure food supplies for the towns. The factories could not produce if the workers were not fed, but the peasants were not keen to sell their crops unless they

<sup>1</sup> U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis paper No. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Rumanian Ministry of Agriculture figures, dated 18 February 1947.

<sup>3</sup> U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis paper No. 23

<sup>4</sup> Barker, *Truce in the Balkans*, pp. 107-8.

could buy the products of industry. The peasants felt that they were being forced to feed the towns for next to nothing, while the townspeople imagined to themselves the peasants guzzling in their villages.

The governments' solution was to fix a proportion of the crop which must be delivered to the state at fixed low prices, and to permit the sale of the rest on the 'free market', that is, at a price determined by supply and demand. In general, agricultural prices were forced much lower than industrial. The 'price scissors' between town and country, which had been one of the main curses of East European economy before 1939, was as wide as ever. Even the high prices received from the portion of their produce sold 'freely' did not enable the peasants to buy much from the towns. And the size of the 'free' margin varied with the harvest results. Here Eastern Europe was unlucky. In 1945 sowing had been disorganised by military operations, and in 1946 and 1947 there were severe droughts. Rumania suffered especially in 1946 and Czechoslovakia in 1947. Both years were bad in Bulgaria, and the first in Yugoslavia.

Poland fared least badly, partly no doubt because the changes of frontier had created a more favourable relationship between population and arable land. Of the other countries Hungary was the most fortunate. Elsewhere rationing could only slowly be abandoned, and had to be revived from time to time. Everywhere great efforts were made to ensure better supplies of industrial goods for the countryside, as the best incentive to the peasants both to produce and to sell more to the towns. In Yugoslavia a system of 'linked prices' was introduced early in 1947. Payment for produce sold to the state authorities was made partly in bonds, which enabled the peasant to buy industrial goods at low prices. Sale at 'free' prices would bring him more cash, but without the bonds he would have to pay much higher prices for industrial goods. The system was partly successful during 1947, but after the Cominform boycott the shops were often unable to honour the coupons, and the peasants were once more dissatisfied. In general, between 1945 and 1950 exchange between town and country substantially improved throughout Eastern Europe, but discontent and friction were certainly not eliminated.

Rural co-operatives before the war in Eastern Europe were for the most part credit or marketing associations. There was considerable variety between different regions in the same country, and local branches of the same co-operative organisation often

enjoyed considerable autonomy. There was a good deal of truth in the communist criticism of the old co-operatives, that they favoured the wealthier peasants and did little for the poorest. The new governments set out to centralise the existing co-operatives under a single command and to remove the wealthy peasants from positions of influence. A type of general co-operative shop for the village was created. It became a powerful instrument of government policy. Usually controlled by communists or reliable sympathisers, it became almost the only channel through which the town-made goods the peasants needed could reach them.

Another powerful instrument were the stations for tractors and agricultural machinery, based on the M.T.S. of the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> The stations monopolise the more complicated agricultural machines. Tractor teams, or 'brigades', make agreements with individual peasants to plough their land for payment in cash or in a portion of the crop. As mechanisation, the avowed aim of all the national economic plans, proceeds, as tractors replace draught animals, the governments' control over the peasants increases. The limiting factor is of course the number of machines, especially of tractors. Production of tractors is to be started in Yugoslavia and Rumania, and greatly increased in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The less developed countries also hope to import tractors in large quantities from the U.S.S.R. At the end of 1949 many of the stations were still poorly equipped. But when well supplied with machines, they should be as powerful a weapon as the M.T.S. have been in the U.S.S.R. The latter in the thirties were political as well as economic instruments. Special 'political departments' (*Politotdely*) were set up in Soviet M.T.S. in 1933-4 during the famine crisis in collectivisation. They consisted of Communist Party members, who supervised the execution of government policy in the whole region served by their M.T.S. They were in fact the dictators of the Russian countryside. The first *Politotdely* to appear in Eastern Europe were created in Poland by a decision of the Polish Politburo of December 1950. Their task was defined as the combination of 'the strong influence of M.T.S. technology and agronomy with the authority of the party organisation'.

The national economic plans promise radical treatment of the pre-war problems of rural over-population and under-employment by providing millions of new jobs both in industry proper and in public works. Not unemployment but labour shortage is now the

<sup>1</sup> For Soviet agrarian policy in general, see Prokopovich, *Russlands Volkswirtschaft unter den Sowjets*. For a view conforming to the existing Stalinist 'line', well supported with official Soviet information, see Dobb, *Soviet Economic Development*.

problem. To the planners, surplus village labour is no longer an economic loss but a source of wealth. The villages are required to send recruits to the factories on a much greater scale than ever before. At the same time, an improvement of agricultural output becomes more necessary than before, in order both to increase the food supply for the rapidly growing industrial urban centres and to economise labour in the fields by the use of more modern methods. Both purposes are served by mechanisation of agriculture. And mechanisation is a preparation for a new organisation of agriculture, the collective farm.

The economic arguments in favour of collective farms are well known. Strip cultivation, with its inevitable wastage of land and time, is replaced by cultivation of large areas on which modern machines can be fully used. More scientific methods of livestock breeding can be adopted. The experience and ideas of all the peasants of an area can be pooled. But the political reasons for collectivisation are perhaps more important still. A collective farm may be described as an agricultural factory. The members are part-owners, but they are also employees. They receive their orders and their pay from the committee of the collective farm, in which the key posts are held by communists or reliable sympathisers. The committee is the government's instrument of political control over the peasantry, far more effective than the old bureaucracy which sporadically regimented the scattered peasant communities of the past. Through the committee the communist governments can make their political dictatorship effective in the villages as well as in the towns. Through it they can ensure regular supplies of food and labour for the cities.

Both the local communist leaders and their Soviet masters were always determined that the 'correct' policy of collective farms should be applied in Eastern Europe. It was a matter of expediency when to begin. In the Soviet Union nine years elapsed between the end of the civil war and the introduction of collectivisation. With the lessons of Soviet history before them, the East European leaders and their patrons in Moscow believed that they could act more quickly.

A new phase in agricultural policy was introduced by the Cominform denunciation of the Yugoslav communist leaders in June 1948. The Cominform doctrinaires were shocked that Tito in a speech had described the peasants as 'the most stable foundation of the Yugoslav state'. This was incompatible with the basic communist notion of the leadership of the industrial working class.

The Yugoslav leaders had ignored class differentiation in the countryside and treated the peasantry as a single entity. They had thus ignored 'the well-known Lenin thesis that small individual farming gives birth to capitalism and the bourgeoisie continually, daily, hourly, spontaneously and on a mass scale'.<sup>1</sup>

In actual fact, Tito's error in agricultural policy was rather one of words than of deeds. The Yugoslav leaders did not talk much about class differentiation in the villages, but neither did the communist leaders of the neighbouring countries. The policy pursued in practice by the Yugoslav government was more radical, and less conciliatory to peasant notions of private property, than that of any other except perhaps Bulgaria. In Bulgaria and Yugoslavia already in 1945 some voluntary co-operative farms had been formed, and in the following three years they received greater encouragement from the authorities than private holdings. In Bulgaria a few had existed even under the Filov regime, in the provinces of Svishtov, Plovdiv and Pleven.<sup>2</sup> In 1945 others were set up in new areas. Excess of zeal by local communists, who tried to bully peasants into joining, or exchanging their land with others who wished to join, caused opposition in some districts, and instructions were issued from the Ministry of Agriculture to proceed more slowly and tactfully. By the end of 1946 there were more than 400 in the country, covering about 200,000 hectares. In Yugoslavia co-operative farms were set up in the Voivodina, on land taken from the German minority and now worked in common by peasants brought from the devastated and over-populated mountainous regions. There were also a few outside the Voivodina. In both Bulgaria and Yugoslavia the name Labour Co-operatives was adopted. They were genuinely voluntary enterprises. The rules were not always identical. But they usually provided for payment to members partly according to the amount of land they contributed to the co-operative, and partly according to the work they performed. They also usually provided for secession of members from the co-operative, in which case they would be entitled either to their original land or to a holding of equal size and quality in another part of the village.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Yugoslavia was not behind her neighbours in 'socialisation of agriculture'. It was not the faults of Tito's agricultural policy that drew the wrath of the Cominform on his head. But, having

<sup>1</sup> *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute*, (R.I.I.A. edition), p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Bonev, *Ednolichno ili kooperativno stopanistvane na zemyata v Bulgaria* ('Individual or cooperative management of the land in Bulgaria') (Sofia, 1945), pp. 25 ff.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of the different types of co-operative farm in Yugoslavia, see article by Djevad Horić in *Narodna Država*, April 1949.

decided for other reasons to break with Tito, the Soviet masters of the Cominform also decided to use the occasion to initiate a new policy. This was in keeping with the traditions of the U.S.S.R., where changes of policy were often associated with the denunciation of prominent individuals or groups.

The Cominform statement was the signal for a series of statements of agricultural policy by the East European communist parties. On 11 June 1948 the Rumanian party published a long resolution on the need to 'examine class relations in the countryside', to 'limit capitalist elements in the villages' and to 'organise the agricultural proletariat'. In a speech to the first congress of the 'fused' Hungarian Workers' Party on 10 July, Gerö spoke of the need to combat the influence of the kulaks. There should, however, be no hurry to create co-operative farms. These would be established 'to the extent, and in such forms, as the working peasantry wishes them'. In the small National Peasant Party there were lively arguments between Erdei, who favoured co-operative farms, and Veres, who opposed them. In August the Polish party's Central Committee held a plenary session, and published a statement similar to that of the Rumanian. On 3 August the Bulgarian government announced a plan for agriculture which required that by 1953 30 per cent of agricultural land in Bulgaria should be held by Labour Co-operatives.

The new policy was based on the tactics officially adopted in the Soviet Union twenty years earlier—rely on the support of the poor peasants, win over the bulk of the medium peasants, isolate and destroy the kulaks. Thus in its first stage the new policy concentrated rather on the offensive against the kulaks than on recruitment of the peasant masses into collective farms. A further resolution of the Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers' Party, dated 5 March 1949, stated that the kulaks should be made powerless by 'differential class taxation, which must lighten the burden of the poor and medium peasant and weigh upon the kulak, by a class policy in cereal collection and in the allocation of credits'. All these methods were also applied in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. In all four countries great importance was also attached to the village co-operative shops. As these succeeded in monopolising the exchange of goods between town and country, so the kulaks' chances of making profits from the sale of their surplus diminished—if indeed any surplus remained after the increased taxes had been paid and the increased grain deliveries had been fulfilled. At the same time kulaks were systematically

removed from directing posts, and even from membership, in the co-operatives which ran the shops. In practice, the drive against the kulaks was less peaceful and orderly than these official directives would suggest. Violence was used, both by the police and by organised mobs. Kulaks were arrested for failure to fulfil their obligations—even if these were assessed, deliberately or through ignorance, at an impossibly high level—and kulak houses were sacked by crowds.<sup>1</sup>

The trouble was that it was not easy to define a kulak. The mere size of a holding was, the communists pointed out, an insufficient guide. Kulaks differed from 'working peasants' (the official phrase usually employed for the two categories of poor and medium peasants together) by greater wealth and by the exploitation of the labour of others. Exploitation might take the forms of hiring labour on their farms, or lending money, or 'speculation'. Obviously personal enmity or envy might play a part in the definition of the kulaks in any locality. In March 1949 Rákosi, in a statement to the Hungarian Workers' Party, drew attention to two distinct 'deviations' which had been observed in the last months. The 'right-wing deviation' was to take such trouble not to antagonise the medium peasants as to allow kulaks to disguise themselves as medium peasants and so retain their pernicious influence, while the interests of the poor peasants were neglected. The 'left-wing deviation' was to go so far in defence of the poor peasants as to lump together all medium peasants and kulaks. If the first error were pursued, no radical changes would ever take place at all. If the second should prevail, the great majority of the peasantry would side with the kulaks against the government's policy.<sup>2</sup> In Poland similar errors were officially denounced. In the western provinces there had been too much tenderness to kulaks. In other areas 'petty-bourgeois pseudo-radicalism' had led to the opposite extreme.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to collectivisation proper, the Rumanian, Hungarian, Polish and Czechoslovak parties repeatedly stressed the necessity of prudence. The Rumanian resolution of March 1949 said: 'It would be mistaken and damaging to proceed to mass collectivisation as long as there are no technical foundations,

<sup>1</sup> Examples of excesses in treatment of kulaks in Hungary are given in an article by A. Hegedűs, 'Elhajlások Pártunk falusi politikájának végrehajtásában' ('Deviations in the execution of our party's village policy'), in *Társadalmi Szemle*, April 1949.

<sup>2</sup> *Társadalmi Szemle*, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> See article by Jerzy Tepicht, 'W sprawie walki klasowej na wsi' ('In the matter of the class struggle in the village'), in *Nowe Drogi*, December 1948.

insufficient specialists, and thorough propaganda work among the masses has not convinced them voluntarily to organise collectives'. It specified that 30,000 tractors would be needed before Rumanian agriculture was ready for large-scale collectivisation. Rákosi in Hungary adopted the same line. 'He who exerts pressure or compulsion,' he said, 'is playing into the hands of the kulak.' At the first congress of the Polish United Workers' Party in December 1948, Minc announced that during the period of the Six-Year Plan, 'gradually, systematically, on the basis of complete free will, production co-operatives will develop'. During 1949 not more than one per cent of the rural households of Poland would belong to them. Czechoslovak agrarian policy was laid down in a statement by Gottwald to the Communist Party's Central Committee in November 1948. It stressed measures against the kulaks but was vague about co-operative farms. The same caution marked the references to agriculture in the report of Slansky to the ninth congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in May 1949.

Bulgarian policy was more ambitious. As we have seen, the Five-Year Plan laid down that by 1953 collective farms must produce 60 per cent of the country's agricultural output. This result, it was claimed, would be attained not by force but by propaganda and persuasion. In June 1949 however the Bulgarian party officially admitted that abuses had occurred and attributed them to 'left-wing sectarianism', for which the disgraced leader Traicho Kostov was blamed.<sup>1</sup> The Yugoslav communists went even faster. At the end of 1948 there were 1,318 co-operative farms in the country. During 1949 there was a rapid drive for collectivisation. Mass propaganda was directed to the medium and poor peasants, while those who showed themselves unwilling—not necessarily the richer peasants—were assessed for deliveries to the state at impossibly high amounts and so driven into bankruptcy. Early in 1950 the number of co-operative farms had risen to about 7,000, and these controlled about 25 per cent of the country's arable land. In Macedonia the percentage was 50, and in the rich wheatlands of Vojvodina it was nearly 50. In Croatia however it was only 14 and in Slovenia 11. During 1950 the pace slackened. In most parts of the country the authorities sought rather to consolidate the farms which had been created than to increase their number still further. The exception was Macedonia, where pressure continued and by mid-1951 the percentage of arable held by collectives had risen to 63.

<sup>1</sup> See below p. 315.

It would be wrong to attach too much importance to the many declarations by the East European communist leaders that collectivisation would be voluntary. The word 'voluntary' must be understood in the light of Soviet experience.

The avowed intention of Soviet policy in the 'Second Revolution' of the thirties was the same as is now announced in Eastern Europe—to isolate and destroy the kulaks, form an alliance of the workers with the 'working' (poor and medium) peasantry, and persuade the peasant masses of the advantages of collective farms so that they should voluntarily enter them. What actually happened was that the emissaries of the Communist Party in many areas antagonised the whole peasantry. Many villages revolted, and had to be suppressed with troops. Millions of peasants, of whom many were neither wealthy nor exploiters of the labour of others, were deported as kulaks to forced labour in distant provinces. Some animals were slaughtered by their owners, others perished untended in the collective farms to which they were suddenly transferred. The majority of the peasants were forced into collective farms. As tractors were not available in sufficient numbers, and draught animals were greatly reduced by the slaughter, large areas remained unploughed and the crops were too small to feed the people. Priority of food supplies was assured to the cities by forcible requisitions, and great numbers of peasants starved.

Stalin himself, in his famous 'Dizziness from success' statement of March 1930, threw the blame for injustices on local officials, and described forcible creation of collective farms as 'stupid and reactionary'. Yet only a few months earlier he had urged ruthlessness and speed.<sup>1</sup> After 1930 the pace was slackened, and concessions were made to the peasants. But confusion and famine continued in parts of the country until 1933 at least. Yet the accounts given by official writers in the Soviet Union, and by communists in other countries, claim in retrospect that the process was voluntary, and only to some extent marred by mistakes. These mistakes, they argue, were inevitable in the execution of a pioneer policy in a backward country by inexperienced officials. They were rectified by the wisdom of the great Stalin. But the truth is that the mistakes were not incidental, but were the very essence of the policy. Russian agriculture was collectivised by force, and the man responsible for this was Stalin himself.

When therefore the East European communists declared that

<sup>1</sup> Deutscher, *Stalin, a Political Biography*, pp. 323-5.

they would use only persuasion and propaganda, they were using these words in their special Soviet meaning. Admittedly they would prefer to avoid the mistakes committed in Russia in 1929-33. But policy depended not on their preferences but on the speed and type of industrialisation chosen for them by their masters in Moscow. And Moscow's decision is determined less by economic factors than by an estimate of the intentions of the Western powers and of the war potential of the Soviet block in the face of 'the imperialists'.

This was shown by developments since mid-1950, that is since the outbreak of the war in Korea. The upward revision of the Polish Six-Year Plan and of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Five-Year Plans coincided with new pressure on the peasantry. This was most marked in Bulgaria. Already in 1951 it was stated that 48 per cent of the arable land was held by collective or state farms. Having denounced Kostov for forcing the pace, the communist leaders forced it still more. The peasants resisted. Even official information showed that there had been widespread slaughter of livestock. Armed clashes between peasants and police were also reported. The dismissal of the Minister of Agriculture, Chernokolev, in June 1951 did not lead to a milder policy. In the autumn of 1951 collective and state farms in Hungary held over 20 per cent of the arable, in Czechoslovakia 27 per cent. In both these countries it was expected that half the arable land would be in the possession of collective or state farms by the end of 1952. The situation in Poland and Rumania was less clear.<sup>1</sup>

In Yugoslavia the opposite tendency was seen. Peasant opposition was stubborn, especially in Croatia, where the memory of a strong peasant movement is still alive, and in Macedonia, where mistrust of Belgrade is old and deep-rooted. A severe drought in 1950 increased the government's troubles. Official spokesmen admitted that state farms wasted manpower in excessive administration. The attempt to force individual peasants into collective farms was virtually abandoned in 1951. As an incentive to individual output, compulsory deliveries were abolished for meat, milk and fodder—though not for cereals. But as pressure was relaxed the peasants showed more openly their dislike of collectivisation. The government faced the unpleasant choice of tolerating an

<sup>1</sup> Collective farms in Poland increased from 243 early in 1950 to 2,500 a year later, but still held only a small portion of the arable. State farms were more numerous and held more land in Poland than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. For Polish intentions for agriculture under the revised Plan, see above, p. 249. In Rumania in mid-1951 there were 1,000 collective farms, holding 2.4 per cent of the arable land.

exodus from the existing collective farms or returning to coercion.

#### LABOUR

Industrial workers are the class in whose name the new regimes rule, the 'leading' and the 'most revolutionary' class. The workers, despised under the old regime, are now a powerful organised force. Trade unions have swollen in numbers and have been reorganised. New unions have sprung up where none were known before. Even backward Albania now has more than 60,000 trade union members. The structure of the trade union movements has changed. It has been simplified and centralised. Small unions have been merged. Local differences and autonomies have been abolished. Both regionally and industrially the unions are subject to strict centralised discipline. At the head of the whole hierarchy is the central executive committee, firmly controlled by reliable communists. The whole power of the state is thrown behind the unions. In fact the unions are part of the state machine.

Before the war, in the less industrially developed of the East European countries, union activities were hindered not only by police repression but also by the influx of unskilled labour from the over-populated villages. This constant supply of cheap labour forced down the wages of the working class as a whole. Only some skilled trades were unaffected. This problem was less acute in industrialised Bohemia and western Poland than in the south-eastern countries, but even there it was felt. The national economic plans of the new regimes require an enormous and rapid increase in the number of industrial workers. The influx from the villages will be far greater now than ever in the past. Its effects will be felt as much in the countries where industry is well established as in those where it is only beginning. It is with this problem above all others that the trade unions must deal.

Before the war, the unions, when the police allowed them to act at all, fought the bosses on behalf of the workers. Theirs was the classical fight for wages and hours of work, fought in conditions as difficult as in England a hundred years ago. To-day the factories are run by the government, which is itself controlled by the political party to which the union leaders belong. They cannot fight the boss to-day. The main task is now to increase production. Each worker's slice will be bigger if the whole cake is increased. The unions' task is thus to make the worker work harder. This problem is of course familiar in the West: but in Eastern Europe it is on quite a different scale. The tasks are relatively much greater,

the time allowed for them is much shorter, and the amount of skilled labour available is utterly insufficient. Thus the trade unions in Eastern Europe have a double task: to extract the maximum effort out of the existing number of skilled workers, and to mould into a labour force the hundreds of thousands of strong but inexperienced peasants' sons and daughters from the villages.

The shortage of skilled workers is aggravated by a new factor. Many workers have been transferred from the factories to posts in one of the three bureaucracies—the state machine, the Communist Party and the trade unions. Though the proportion of workers in the communist parties is not as high as their leaders wish and doctrine requires, yet it is considerable. Inevitably the ablest workers in the party are those who are most likely to be given administrative posts. Party or trade union duties at the lowest level can be combined with work in the factory, though they distract the worker and diminish his efficiency to some extent. But as he rises within the trade union or the party hierarchy, his union or party activities absorb all his time, and he ceases to be a worker. Moreover a number of workers are moved from the factories to full-time jobs in the civil administration. These men call themselves workers still, but they are in fact bureaucrats. The use of the word merely denotes pride of birth, not essentially different from the aristocratic titles of the previous social order.

In order to increase the output of the workers, the new regimes have copied Soviet methods. Piece rates are being extended to as many industries as possible. Titles such as 'shock-worker' and 'hero of labour' are being introduced. Money prizes and medals are awarded for outstanding performances by individuals and groups. Overtime is supposed to be voluntary, but great efforts are certainly made to persuade workers to volunteer. It is paid at higher rates than ordinary hours. For instance, in the collective contracts signed between managements and unions in Poland in January 1949, pay rises by 50 per cent for the first two hours of overtime, and by 100 per cent for the third and any further hours. The fact that these provisions were made shows that there are at least some Polish workers who work as many as twelve hours a day. The Soviet system of 'socialist competition' has also been introduced throughout Eastern Europe. Individual factories challenge each other to achieve certain targets by a certain date. The dates chosen are usually special festivals, such as May Day, or a Com-

munist Party congress. While the competition is on, the trade union officials must spur on and speed up the workers to ever greater efforts.

The trade unions are concerned with the enforcement of labour discipline. Lateness in arrival at work, or slackness at the bench, are liable to severe punishment. The trade union officials exercise their powers with a confidence that the managers of private enterprise in capitalist countries can never have. They know that they will be fully backed by the government. If the workers grumble, their reply is that now that the factory is 'theirs' they must work harder to raise their own standard of living. An essential part of the duties of trade unions is political propaganda. Conferences and lectures are frequent. The workers are told of the sufferings of the exploited Indonesians, Greeks or Spaniards. Attendance is compulsory for party members and desirable for others. Those who consistently miss meetings will have black marks against them. In the communist view political education and productive efficiency are connected. Shortcomings in one direction will affect also the other.

Though output has recovered remarkably since the war the leaders are far from satisfied. A low basic wage is paid for a minimum 'norm' of output per head, above which level extra pay begins. The norms differed widely between different industries, and since 1948 have often been raised. In effect the aim has been to convert the Stahanovite output of today into the norm of tomorrow, and so increase the labour wrung from the worker. Some examples of the Communist leaders' attitude may be taken from Hungary. In January 1950 heavy penalties were introduced for negligence and damage to state property, and any worker changing his job without written permission from his former manager and local Labour exchange was to forfeit his rights to paid holidays and sickness benefit. In May 1950 the Communist manager of the Rákosi (formerly Manfred Weiss) metal works in Budapest accused the workers of malingering and the state doctors of being too kind-hearted to them. On 31st May Gerö complained of 'undisciplined consumption' by workers, which hampers the production of 'the factories, enterprises and machines which are meant to raise our standard of living at a much greater pace tomorrow, to consolidate the peace front and to consolidate our future'.

The regimes claim that in return for the great efforts which they require from the workers, they are assuring them better conditions of labour than in the past. The new social insurance

schemes are based on the Soviet model. Factory canteens, reading rooms, and nurseries for children of women employees are being introduced. Efforts are made to provide 'facilities for recreation'—that is, collective holidays. Individual private leisure is less encouraged. Sport, or 'physculture', is officially supported on a mass rather than on an individual basis. Individual sportsmen must be politically reliable, as was shown by the case of the Czech tennis stars Drobny and Cernik.

The social services look impressive on paper. Two points should however be remembered. The first is that first priority in the use of all scarce social facilities goes to party members, and second priority to shock workers who are not in the party. The mass of the workers have to wait until the promised facilities are available on a much larger scale than at present. The second point is that in the fulfilment of the economic plans, projects of social reform always have the lowest priority. Whenever the plans have to be modified, it is these that are scrapped. For example on 26th February, 1951, Minc told the Polish parliament that, as output was lagging, social expenditure would be curtailed in order to make greater funds available for industrial production. Mining disasters have occurred in Hungary and Poland, which could show that safety precautions are in practice less complete than official dicta would suggest.

It is difficult to generalise about the status of the worker under the new regime in Eastern Europe. He need not fear unemployment, and he may derive some satisfaction from the flood of speeches which tell him that he is a member of the leading class in the nation. The minority of truly skilled workers and of shock workers earn very high pay, but against this must be set the constant strain of overwork. For the millions in Rumania and the Balkan countries who before 1945 lived in misery and insecurity as unskilled workers or as underemployed smallholders, it is possible that not only distant prospects but even present conditions have improved. In Poland and Hungary this is more doubtful, and in Czechoslovakia the situation of a large part of the working class has certainly deteriorated.

In general since the revision of the plans in 1951 the pressure on all workers has grown. In particular, women and children are being increasingly directed to industry. In February 1951 the Polish parliament repealed a law of 1924 which forbade women and youths to do heavy labour. This law was represented as a reactionary infringement of equal rights for women. At the same

time the practise of forced labour, long established in the Soviet Union, is being rapidly developed in Eastern Europe. Bulgaria was the pioneer in this field, but the example has been followed elsewhere, especially in Rumania and Czechoslovakia. In Yugoslavia the introduction in June 1950 of elected works councils, which were to manage the factories, was officially interpreted as a step away from bureaucratic despotism to 'workers control'. Such may be the leaders' sincere intention. But the candidates for election to works councils are still only persons approved by the Communist Party. Nevertheless it is safe to say that the trend in Yugoslavia is towards greater freedom and better conditions for the worker, while the trend in the 'popular democracies' is towards increasing exploitation of the worker by a system which combines the callousness of British capitalism before the factory legislation of the 1840's with the most modern technique of totalitarian police rule.

The main economic factor limiting the standard of living of the East European worker is the difficulty of absorbing into industry the unskilled labour of the village. Lack of machinery, refusal to accept foreign capital, and foreign trade difficulties make the labour supply the most important factor for the achievement of the national economic plans. The surplus labour of the over-populated villages, the chief weakness of the pre-war East European economy, is now the region's main resource. If machines and skilled workers are scarce, then what could be done by one skilled worker with a machine must often be done by five, ten or twenty pairs of unskilled strong hands. The process must be immensely painful. The few skilled managers and foremen, over-worked and harrassed, can no more show tact or kindness to the men than the old-style sergeant-major confronted by a mass of raw recruits: he will regard them as a herd of cattle and drive them accordingly. Only when the new industries are turning out machines and the new training colleges skilled personnel in far greater numbers will a better life be available for skilled and unskilled worker alike.

#### THE INTELLIGENTSIA

Besides workers and peasants, popular democracy recognises a third class—the 'progressive intelligentsia'. Who is progressive is of course decided by the Communist Parties. The qualifying adjective clearly shows the inferiority of this social group.

The core of the intelligentsia consists of the professional class—

the doctors, lawyers, engineers and teachers. But as at present interpreted in Eastern Europe it extends also to a part of the bureaucracy and of the industrial managers and business experts. If the national economic plans are to be fulfilled, every man and woman possessing special skill or knowledge is urgently needed. But the pre-war intelligentsia was brought up in a spirit unsympathetic or hostile to communism. It was infected with the prejudices of bourgeois education. It had not mastered 'Marxist-Leninist methodology', and was in fact unlikely ever to master it.

Consequently the treatment of the intelligentsia by the new regimes is a mixture of cajolery and persecution. They have continued to employ a large number of the former doctors, teachers, engineers, bureaucrats, and even army and police officers. Some experts, especially technicians and writers, are offered extremely generous salaries and material conditions. They have to work very hard, but they enjoy a good standard of living as long as they keep their job. They have, however, no real security. At any moment the communist leaders may have a bout of panic suspicion, or need a scapegoat for their own faults, or simply wish to make a few examples *pour encourager les autres*. Then without warning the unhappy manager, official or journalist is torn from his life of luxury and cast into prison, to appear in due course in court as an agent of Western imperialism, spying for the capitalists or defaming his country's good name, or deliberately sabotaging production. The new regimes' attitude to the intelligentsia is in fact the same as that of the Soviet regime in the twenties. It inevitably induces unwillingness to take responsibility, and determination to please every whim of the new masters rather than perform the work the way that knowledge and experience would show.

The communists of course regard this as an unsatisfactory transitory stage. Their aim is to produce as quickly as possible a new intelligentsia, trained in Marxist-Leninist principles. This new intelligentsia will include not only the professions which in the West might be termed intellectual, but also the whole higher administrative personnel—the leading bureaucrats, the factory managers, the trade union bosses, and the cadres of the Communist Party itself. This new intelligentsia will not have a lower social standing than the workers and peasants: it will form the new ruling class, as is the case in the U.S.S.R.<sup>1</sup> Of course even at

<sup>1</sup> By this I mean only that the intelligentsia, in the broad sense defined above, is the class which at present rules the U.S.S.R. and will in the near future (indeed to a great extent already does) rule Eastern Europe. I do not mean that there has yet been formed a new hereditary ruling class in the U.S.S.R., or will be in Eastern Europe. It may be that this is or will soon be the case, but the evidence is insufficient.

present those administrators and experts who are docile Communist Party members enjoy greater social prestige than any other group. But for the most part they do not call themselves either intellectuals or bureaucrats, but 'workers', though many have long abandoned the factory-bench for the life of professional party organiser, and some were never at the bench all their lives.

The new intelligentsia is to be created by the new system of education. The positive side of the new system is that poorer children get a better opportunity of mounting the educational ladder. Between the world wars, it is true, great progress was made in education throughout Eastern Europe. Primary education was greatly developed, and where it was not effective the obstacles lay as much in the difficulty of communications and the prejudices of the parents as in the policy of the governments. Secondary and higher education were also greatly improved in comparison with the Russian or Ottoman empires, or the Hungarian half of the Habsburg empire. But they were still quite inadequate. What had been a luxury for the aristocracy and the wealthy bourgeoisie became accessible to children of medium peasants and small state officials: but for children of poor peasants or factory workers exceptional ability and good fortune were necessary to secure a higher education. The present regimes have set out to favour children of workers and to a lesser extent of poor peasants. In Hungary even before the war a movement was started to create 'people's colleges' for poor peasants' children. The pioneer was a certain Györfy, whose name was given to the first college. The movement was led by the left-wing group of intellectuals and peasants connected with the National Peasant Party. But in 1948 the movement was rebuked by the communists for paying too much attention to peasants and too little to workers. The colleges were brought under closer control by the communists, and the social composition of the pupils received was changed to the advantage of workers. Nevertheless, though less favoured than workers, poor peasants have a better chance to get their children educated throughout Eastern Europe than they had before the war.

Besides helping children of the poor, the new regimes also discriminate against the children of the formerly wealthy. It is made increasingly difficult for ex-bourgeois children to attend universities. This represents a loss, for such children have the advantage, which should not be underestimated, of growing up

in a more cultured background. It should be by no means impossible for the regimes to win over many of these children at school and university: they prefer, however, to treat them as enemies, irremediably corrupted by the reactionary prejudices of their parents.

The main concern of the educational reformers has been to create a uniform type of school. It is considered more important to standardise teaching than to enable the abler pupils to rise quickly. This was the purpose of the Act passed in April 1948 in Czechoslovakia and of a series of laws passed in Hungary in the same year. Hungary's Catholic schools were nationalised in June 1948. The Rumanian educational reform was introduced in April 1948. During the summer foreign religious and other schools were closed in both Rumania and Bulgaria. The ban eliminated such fine institutions as the American college of Sofia and French foundations in Rumania. In Czechoslovakia, the Slovak religious schools had been taken over by the state during the rule of the 'independent' Slovak government of the Catholic Mgr. Tiso: the new regime kept its control, though of course applying it in a very different spirit, especially after February 1948. In the Czech lands obstacles began to be placed in the way of Catholic schools from 1948 onwards. The same process was slower in Poland.

The purpose of the new education is technical proficiency and Marxist-Leninist indoctrination, rather than preparation of the pupils to think for themselves. The emphasis on scientific and technical knowledge is to a large extent justified. Before the war all Eastern Europe suffered from a surfeit of law graduates expecting as of right employment in the civil service. On the other hand there were too few doctors, and far too few industrial and agricultural engineers. But the need to remedy these defects does not justify the regimentation of thought which is becoming universal in the education system of the whole region.

Different countries are of course at different stages. Yugoslavia was the pioneer in Marxist-Leninist indoctrination until the Tito-Cominform breach. Since then, the doctrine has been interpreted so as to allow for emphasis on the variety of Marxist development possible in individual countries, and especially in Yugoslavia. A careful watch is kept for Cominformism, which is of course as much a heresy in Titoist eyes as Titoism in Cominformist. But there is no evidence that the exclusion of non-Marxist ideas is any less severe than before the breach. In Albania indoctrination is made easier by the very slight previous growth of non-Marxist

democracy. Between Islamic traditionalism and Marxism-Leninism the intermediate stages are almost absent. Hoxha and his friends are therefore faced with a task of modernisation not unlike that of the Soviet Bolsheviks among the Tadjiks or Turkmens. The Marxist schools are the first modern schools for most Albanians. In Bulgaria already in 1946 entry to the university depended on presentation of a certificate from the branch of the communist-led Fatherland Front in the student's home area that he or she was politically reliable. Indoctrination is intense from the primary school upwards. In Rumania, schools and university faculties have 'educational councillors' and 'spiritual guides', appointed by the Minister of Education, whose task is to indoctrinate not only pupils but also their parents. Committees of students and schoolchildren are encouraged to spy on their comrades and report them. In Poland a subject called 'Polish contemporary history' is taught in the schools. It is a euphemism for Marxist propaganda. In Czechoslovakia things have moved more slowly. But at the ninth congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, in May 1949, the Minister of Information, Vaclav Kopecky, declared that the government intended to 'conduct the entire state education, both in and out of school, in the spirit of our ideology, in the spirit of our scientific truths, of Marxist-Leninist theory'.

There is of course no doubt that before the war not only the important works of Marx, but also the whole field of the social sciences, were neglected throughout Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia was the only country where they were at all adequately considered. But the forced growth of Marxism-Leninism under the new regimes is more than a corrective to the reactionary romanticism of the past. Marxism-Leninism means in practice the parrot-like repetition of the slogans of the Agitprop department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party in Moscow. As the number of educated Marxists, really familiar with the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, is extremely small, slavish repetition of phrases learned by heart is the only safeguard for teachers who know that they will be severely punished if they deviate from an orthodoxy which most of them do not yet understand. Lectures on French literature, Plato's philosophy or hydrostatics have to be spiced with quotations from Marx, Lenin, Stalin, or—in Yugoslavia—Tito and Kardelj. Little collections of quotations on all subjects by these great men are made available for the benefit of teachers.

The minds of adults are cared for hardly less thoroughly than those of children. Press, radio and publications are of course controlled by the Communist Parties. But perhaps more grave is the fact that censorship extends not only to ideas expressed to-day but to those expressed in the past. Public libraries are purged by stages. Publishing is nationalised, with very few exceptions. This means that the Communist Party can decide what books shall be reprinted. As the war left a severe book shortage throughout Eastern Europe, common text-books and classics from before the war are hard to obtain.

Books in private possession are bound to dwindle. Perhaps the main reason for this is the shortage of housing space. As residential building has a low priority in all the national economic plans, and all also provide for an enormous increase in the number of industrial workers—and so of the urban population—pressure on living space will steadily increase. Already regulations are being introduced to force ex-bourgeois families to give up some of their rooms—the only asset remaining to them—and in some cases to leave the capitals or principal cities. Inevitably within a few years housing conditions in East European cities will resemble those which have long prevailed in Soviet cities. Forced to move into one room with their families, owners of books will have to jettison them. As the new privileged are unlikely to wish to buy them, they will find their way to the dustbin. Before long sources of non-Marxist-Leninist knowledge will have disappeared.

This system is based on force, and could not be made to work without force. It is bitterly resented by many people, and there is no independent evidence to suggest that it is welcomed by any but the small minority of convinced communists and the rather larger number of cynical careerists. There is certainly no evidence for the view, widely held by apologists for communism in Western Europe, that 'only a few intellectual malcontents' care about intellectual freedom, that the workers and peasants care only for their daily bread and a job. Neither in Eastern nor in Western Europe do workers or peasants care only for material comfort. There are no doubt individual workers and peasants, like individual bureaucrats, capitalists or members of any other social group, who care only for these things. But no Western apologist for communism, nor any outside observer of any political complexion, has the right to decide whether the workers and peasants of Eastern Europe are capable of 'appreciating freedom of thought'.

## THE CHURCHES

Communist control of the schools was bound to lead to conflict with the Christian churches. No church can consent to the forcible indoctrination of children with Marxist-Leninist atheism. It must put up a fight.

Eastern Europe is divided between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, with several small but influential Protestant communities as minorities. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the northern provinces of Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia and the Voivodina) are mainly Catholic. The Orthodox church is dominant in Rumania, southern Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia) and Bulgaria. In Transylvania there was an important minority belonging to the Uniate (or 'Greek Catholic') Church.<sup>1</sup>

The Protestants fall into three main groups. Calvinists amount to about a quarter of the population of Hungary, and are also numerous among the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Czech Protestants include various groups which trace their spiritual descent from the medieval reformer John Hus. The third branch are the Lutherans, who form about 20 per cent of the population in Slovakia, have a following in Hungary, and predominate among the 'Saxons' of southern Transylvania, the older of the two German communities in Rumania.

Finally Islam predominates in Albania, and there are important Moslem minorities in Bosnia, Sandjak, Macedonia and eastern Bulgaria, extending more sparsely along the Black Sea coast of Rumania.

The attitude of East European communists to the churches, like that of the Soviet government, is largely determined by their international connections. The Catholic church, owing allegiance to a supreme international authority residing outside the Soviet zone, is considered a dangerous enemy. The dependence of the Vatican on the American imperialists is a favourite theme of communist propaganda within and without the Soviet zone. The Protestant churches have much looser but important connections with the Protestants of the Anglo-Saxon countries, Scandinavia and Germany. They are therefore regarded with suspicion. Moslems are to some extent suspect of sympathy with Turkey, the base tool of the Western imperialists. The Orthodox church has connections with Greece and with the Orthodox communities of the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 3.

Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt. Hitherto Moscow appears to have believed that these connections could be used to further Soviet policy rather than be turned against it. Therefore, though the Orthodox church too is an ideological enemy, it has enjoyed a privileged position in Eastern Europe.

The governments of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania have sought to control their Orthodox churches and make of them a buttress—not very reliable, yet useful—of the new regime. Priests or bishops who strongly opposed the government have received the customary ruthless treatment.

In Yugoslavia many priests supported Mihailović's Chetniks or Nedić's 'government of national salvation'. Some of these fled the country, others were punished. But there were also Orthodox priests in the partisan ranks. After the war the Patriarch Gavrila, who had maintained a dignified and patriotic attitude under occupation, and had been deported to Germany, returned to Yugoslavia. His relations with Tito's regime cannot be expected to be good, but he performed his functions till his death in 1950. To some extent the church has become a focus of opposition to the regime, and it is noteworthy that attendance of men at church services is higher than it used to be. The Serbs took their religion as lightly as any nation except in times of national emergency. It may be suspected that their interest in the church is not entirely due to religious conviction. But the Yugoslav government tolerated the church after liberation, and since the Tito-Cominform breach pressure has not increased.

In Bulgaria, the Metropolitan of Sofia, Stefan, who with Moscow's approval visited the oecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople and became reconciled,<sup>1</sup> accepting the title of Exarch under the Patriarchal authority, collaborated with the government until 1948. Though a subtle diplomat, Stefan was unable to preserve

<sup>1</sup> The oecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople in the days of the Byzantine empire claimed supreme spiritual authority over the whole Orthodox church. This authority was on the whole supported by the Ottoman Turkish Sultans after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, as far as the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman empire were concerned. In 1870, however, an Exarchate was set up for the Orthodox church of Bulgaria, which till then had been dominated at the higher level by Greek bishops. The Sultan granted the Exarchate against the opposition of the Patriarchate. When in 1878 Bulgaria became an independent state, its church became in practice independent of Constantinople. The Exarch resided in Constantinople, but the second holder of the office, the Exarch Joseph, was a nominee of the Patriarch and had no authority inside Bulgaria. When Joseph died in 1915 no Exarch was elected, and the Bulgarian church thus remained without an official head. The reconciliation between the Bulgarian church and the Patriarchate, brought about in 1945, was essentially a part of a Soviet political manoeuvre to use the authority of the Patriarch in order to win the sympathy of the Orthodox churches outside the Soviet territorial sphere. The Archbishop of Sofia, Stefan, was recognised as Exarch by the Patriarch on 26 February 1945. In October 1945 Stefan paid an official visit to Constantinople.

good relations with the government, and resigned. A law defining the position of the church was passed in February 1949. Article 12 provides that 'ministers, as well as other officials of the churches, who break the law, offend against public order or morality, or who work against the democratic institutions of the state, may at the proposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs be temporarily suspended from office or dismissed'. The leaders of the church are informed of the proposal, and if they do not suspend the guilty person he is 'suspended by administrative order'. This article, together with the article in the constitution forbidding political activity by priests, provides the government with powers capable of wide interpretation.

The Rumanian government had the advantage of an obliging collaborator in the person of Justinian, appointed Metropolitan of Iași after the war, who was elected Patriarch in 1948. The Orthodox church of Rumania has been used more successfully as an instrument of state policy than that of any other country but the U.S.S.R.

The government supported a campaign by the Orthodox church for the 'return to the fold' of the Rumanian Uniates. Several Uniate bishops and priests were arrested by the authorities during the summer of 1948. In the autumn these methods had their desired result. An unrepresentative body of cowed Uniate priests formally asked, on behalf of their church, to be readmitted into the ranks of Orthodoxy. The Orthodox church was happy to accept, and the government recognised the change. The Uniate church therefore no longer legally existed in Rumania, and its property has passed to the Orthodox. In using police terror to force one religious community into subordination to another, the Rumanian communists were following the example of the Soviet communists. The Soviet government used similar methods in 1945 to force the Uniates of eastern Galicia (reannexed from Poland) and Ruthenia (annexed from Czechoslovakia) to 're-enter' the Orthodox church. It is a curious irony of history that this piece of religious persecution, which the theocratic imperial Russia of Pobedonostsev never achieved, was carried out by the ex-seminarist from Tiflis, Djugashvili-Stalin. It is true that for generations the Orthodox church had wished to reconvert the Uniates, but neither its leaders nor the heads of governments had made much effort, and there was no popular demand for it. It has been done not for religious but for international reasons, in

order to crush two defenceless outposts which had connections with the West.

The position of the Orthodox church in Rumania was stabilised by a law of August 1948. The senior ranks of the hierarchy can only be filled 'after approval by the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, given by decree, at the proposal of the government, following the recommendation of the Minister of Religion.' Before taking up their duties, they must swear not to allow their subordinates to undertake or take part, or themselves undertake or take part in, 'any action likely to affect public order and the integrity of the Rumanian People's Republic'. It remains to be seen whether the greater subservience of the Rumanian Orthodox church will in practice secure it better treatment by the government than its sister churches.

The hopes which Moscow has placed on the exploitation of Orthodox churches outside the Soviet sphere do not appear to have been realised. The Orthodox church in Greece is almost solid against the communists. The new oecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras is an American.<sup>1</sup> The Orthodox churches of the Middle East respond but little to Soviet blandishments. As these hopes are progressively disappointed, it seems likely that the utility of the Orthodox church to Moscow will diminish, and its treatment therefore deteriorate.

The Hungarian Calvinists reached an agreement with the government in 1948. This left them some of their schools and all their religious training colleges. Agreement was, however, only achieved after the head of the church, Bishop Ravasz, retired and was succeeded by the more accommodating Bereczky. The agreement was not unfavourable, but opposition to it within the church was based on the belief that it would not in fact be honoured. The head of the Lutheran church in Hungary, Bishop Ordass, was arrested for alleged currency offences. Fifteen Protestant pastors in Bulgaria were tried for various acts of treason in February 1949, and duly confessed in court. It was clear from the court pro-

<sup>1</sup> Athenagoras left Greece in 1931 to become Archbishop of the Orthodox community of Greek origin in the United States. He became an American citizen in 1938. He was enthroned as Patriarch in Constantinople in January 1949. He received belated congratulations from Alexei, Patriarch of Moscow, in April 1949. On 18 July 1949 he saw fit to follow the Pope's example by threatening with excommunication Orthodox believers who became communists. The Patriarch's authority over members of Orthodox churches outside Turkey is of course not comparable with that of the Pope over Catholics throughout the world. It is therefore doubtful whether Athenagoras's declaration will have much effect.

ceedings that their sin was that they had friendly relations with American and British Protestants.

The most serious church conflicts have concerned the Roman Catholic church. The first arose in Yugoslavia. A part of the Catholic clergy in Slovenia and Croatia gave a more positive support to the German or Italian invaders of Yugoslavia and to the Croatian fascists of Pavelić than merely religious duties required. Bishop Šarić of Sarajevo is perhaps the outstanding 'collaborator'.<sup>1</sup> There were also individual cases where Catholic priests encouraged the massacres of Serbs and Jews. The resentment of many Yugoslav patriots at this behaviour, and the traditional dislike of the Orthodox for Catholicism, were exploited by Tito's government to make a direct attack on the church. Not only those who had helped the enemy suffered. The most striking case was Archbishop Stepinac of Zagreb, head of the Catholic church in Croatia. Performance of his religious duties had obliged him to have official dealings with Pavelić and with the occupation authorities. But there was little evidence that he had positively supported either, and substantial evidence that he had been in frequent conflict with them; no evidence that he had encouraged outrages against Serbs and Jews, and substantial evidence that he had protected persons who were in danger. But he was an avowed opponent of communism, and it is for that sin that he received a sixteen-year prison sentence. On 5 December 1951 the Yugoslav government, probably in order to make a good impression on Catholic opinion in the United States, released Stepinac. His status remained unsettled. The Vatican still consider him Archbishop, while the Belgrade government denies this.

The head of the Hungarian Catholic church, Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, was openly and loudly hostile to the government from the first days of the new regime. A brave and obstinate man, a narrow Hungarian nationalist, and a conservative with little understanding for social issues, Mindszenty was an almost medieval figure, a prelate from the heroic times of the Turkish invasions. He antagonised not only the communists but the large number of Hungarian democrats who at first believed that collaboration with communists was possible, and in any case wished as strongly as the communists themselves to transform the semi-feudal and chauvinist Hungary which the cardinal seemed to defend. But as the fraud and force used by the communists

<sup>1</sup> See Clissold, *Whirlwind*, pp. 100 ff.

became ever clearer, Mindszenty seemed to be vindicated. He had from the first insisted that communists could not be trusted, and that no terms offered by them should be accepted because they would not be kept. He had criticised the land reform, not because he felt that peasants should not own land, but because it removed the revenue from which the Catholic church maintained its schools, which were some 60 per cent of all schools in Hungary. The government at first supported the Catholic schools from its funds, but Mindszenty did not trust its intentions. And in June 1948 the government nationalised schools, against the votes in parliament of the followers of the Catholic Barámkovics. The Catholic youth organisation had already been dissolved, and the Catholic press reduced to one much-censored weekly. The government declared that though schools were nationalised, religious instruction would continue. But Mindszenty trusted the government less than ever. The Communist Party had its means of bringing pressure on working-class and peasant parents, and if necessary on the children themselves, to 'request' the suspension of religious teaching at a later stage. So Mindszenty stubbornly opposed the government, and ordered teaching priests to give up their jobs. About 2,500 teachers thus left. By the autumn the government claimed that two-thirds of the vacant places were filled. The cardinal continued his denunciations of the government. He became the symbol of all opposition, political as well as religious.

On 27 December 1948 he was arrested on a charge of conspiracy.<sup>1</sup> The evidence at his trial showed that he had denounced the government in conversation with the American Minister, that he thought a third world war probable and that he hoped for the overthrow of the regime. The prosecution also maintained that during a visit to the United States he had conversed with the ex-Archduke Otto, Pretender to the throne of the Habsburgs. The sum total of evidence showed that he was a fanatical enemy of the government: this he had never denied, and he had good reason for it. If he believed another war was coming, so unfortunately did millions in Hungary, including many communists. No solid evidence showed that he had taken steps to overthrow the government or to start a war. But the government achieved an undoubted success by bringing him into court and making him confess that

<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian government's case is contained in its 'Yellow Book' on the subject. The case for Mindszenty is contained in a collection of documents and statements published outside Hungary under the title *Four Years' Struggle of the Church in Hungary* (Longmans, 1949).

his previous attitude had been mistaken. Whether this was achieved by threats, torture or simply exploitation of his moral doubts on the best way to protect his flock, is not and cannot be known. The leading figure in the Hungarian church after Mindszenty's removal was Archbishop Groesz of Kalocsa, who did his best to protect Catholics by some compromise with the authorities. In August 1950 an agreement was signed by which the Catholic bishops promised that the clergy would not engage in political opposition (the three issues of the Five-Year Plan, collectivisation of agriculture and the Moscow-sponsored 'peace campaign' were specifically mentioned), while the Government promised to ensure freedom of religious belief and activity, to restore a few schools to the church and to support it financially at a diminishing rate for the next eighteen years. But government attacks on the church soon revived. In June 1951 Archbishop Groesz in his turn was tried for treason, and he too confessed to his crimes. In July the bishops took the formal oath of allegiance to the Hungarian People's Republic. But the struggle for freedom of conscience continued.

In Poland the church for a time enjoyed more freedom than in neighbouring countries. Mgr. Wyszynski, who became Primate of the Polish Church on the death of Cardinal Hlond in 1948, had a reputation for conciliation and diplomacy. But this did not prevent the Communists from denouncing the church as a centre of political reaction. In August 1949 a new law was passed which, while purporting to guarantee freedom to all religious beliefs, gives the authorities power to impose heavy penalties on priests showing dislike for the regime. In April 1950 an agreement was signed between government and episcopate on the same basis as the Hungarian agreement described above. By the autumn it had broken down. The government accused the church of breaking it, the church leaders replied that the violation had come from the government side, with arrests of priests and interference with the schools that remained under church control.

A feature of Communist attacks on Polish Catholicism has been the allegation that the Vatican favours Germany at the expense of Poland. A papal letter to the German bishops in 1948, which expressed sympathy for the plight of German refugees from territory annexed by Poland, was given much publicity and a tendentious interpretation. Since the war the Sees in these territories had remained vacant. The Polish church was pressed by the government to fill them, but could not do so without Vatican authority.

In January 1951 the government declared that the Sees would be administered by five capitular vicars elected by the chapters. In practice the 'election' meant nomination by the Communist Party. The purpose of this action was to mobilise Polish nationalism against the church in general and the Vatican in particular.

In Czechoslovakia the clash came sooner. Between the world wars the Catholic church suffered in Bohemia from the odium of its long association with Austria and the Habsburgs. But its patriotic stand under German occupation won it a new popularity. The Czechs of Moravia had always been more devout than those of Bohemia, while in Slovakia the influence of the church was still stronger. The Archbishop of Prague after liberation, Mgr. Beran, enjoyed universal respect. Unlike Mindszenty, he could not possibly be called a reactionary. He had also been in a concentration camp in Germany. In February 1948, however, Beran earned the Communists' hatred by suspending the priest Plojhar who accepted a seat in the new Gottwald government in defiance of instructions to Catholic priests to take no part in politics. In the summer of 1949 negotiations between government and church for a settlement of outstanding questions broke down. In June the government set up a 'Catholic Action Committee' composed of collaborationist priests and laymen, which claimed to represent Catholic opinion, praised official policy and denounced the 'reactionary bishops'. With Vatican approval, Beran threatened 'ecclesiastical sanctions' against all Catholics who should support it. In Prague cathedral the Archbishop's sermon was interrupted by communist toughs, and he himself was placed under police supervision in his house. A new church law was introduced, similar to the Polish law described above. In March 1951 Beran was deported from Prague, and the archdiocese was placed in the hands of a collaborationist priest whom the government appointed as 'Vicar-General'.

The papal decision of July 1949 to excommunicate communists inevitably sharpened the conflict. The East European governments threatened with prison priests who should refuse the sacraments to communists, and in certain cases the threat was carried out. It now became clearer than ever that the aim of the regimes was to sever the links between the national churches and the Vatican. It is of course intolerable to the Soviet bosses that any organisation should exist in Eastern Europe which has connections with the West. The Catholic church, hierarchically subordinate to Rome, is far the most important such organisation that still remains. The

link with Rome must be broken, and the churches deprived of the moral protection which that link still represents. Then the last stage and real objective of the communists, the destruction of the churches and the suppression of religion, can be seriously begun. Defenders of the East European regimes have tried to win sympathy in Protestant north-western Europe by denouncing the reactionary record and international intrigues of the Vatican. The new regimes, they argue, are only doing what Henry VIII did. Their policy is also compared to that of Clémenceau and Briand forty years ago. These arguments are false. It is true that the Catholic church has been associated with political and social reaction, and that Mindszenty is a man of the extreme right. But the Catholic church is not being attacked because it has tolerated social injustice in the past, or because the Vatican has good relations with North or South America or Franco's Spain. It is being attacked because the new regimes are determined to exclude religious influence from national life. The 'popular democracies' are not trying, like Henry VIII, to make national churches, or like the French radicals, to make religion a matter of individual conscience. Their aim is to destroy all religion, and to replace it by the totalitarian doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, to be inculcated into every child from the cradle upwards. This no church can accept without struggle.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### POLITICAL POWER

#### THE STATE MACHINE

SIX of the East European countries have adopted constitutions closely modelled on the Soviet constitution of 1936. They are Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Poland has adopted a provisional constitution, a halfway stage between the democratic constitution of 1921 and the new constitution—no doubt of the Soviet type—which the present parliament will make.

All seven countries are republics. Their official description is 'people's republic', a halfway stage between 'bourgeois republic' and 'soviet republic'. The disappearance of the Coburg dynasty in Bulgaria was inevitable after the second unsuccessful war on the side of Germany. The Albanian monarchy of King Zog had not deep roots, for Ahmed Zogu had only been one of a number of notables in a land of turbulent beys and chieftains. The Yugoslav dynasty had a peculiar position. The Karadjordjević family was of Serbian origin, and had alternately occupied and claimed the throne of Serbia since the early nineteenth century. It still enjoyed popularity among the peasants of Serbia in 1941, and doubtless has many well-wishers still. But outside the kingdom of Serbia its hold was slight. Even the Serbs of Bosnia and the Voivodina were lukewarm, while Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins had little use for it. The reign of Alexander had associated the dynasty too closely with 'Greater Serb' nationalism. Tito's partisans were justified in arguing that the dynasty had become a cause not of unity but of discord among the people of Yugoslavia. The Rumanian dynasty, though of German (Hohenzollern) origin, was the most genuinely popular of those of Eastern Europe. King Michael's overthrow of Antonescu in August 1944 had not only vitally affected the course of the Second World War, but had also won him increased popularity from his subjects. In the following years he became a symbol in the eyes of Rumanians of all classes of their country's independence. It was this which won him the hostility of the Soviet leaders and led to his forced abdication.

Clearly a sovietised political and economic system is not compatible with hereditary monarchy. But the overthrow of monarchy should not be considered simply a result of Soviet and communist force. It may be doubted whether the institution, which was taken from the West European model in the nineteenth century when the East European countries won their independence, is suited to them. They had not experienced the historical development from which the constitutional monarchies of Britain and Scandinavia arose. The monarchs sought to apply Western standards without understanding the different foundations of their kingdoms. They associated with the small number of their subjects who lived in a West European manner, not realising that these men had less in common with their own compatriots than with Westerners of their own class. The courts maintained a level of pomp and luxury approximating to those of the West. The contrast between this and the poverty of their countries was profound. The kings were far removed from the peasant hovels and workers' slums. This became true even of the Karadjordjević dynasty, whose founder was a Serbian peasant. The monarchies of Eastern Europe, despite the excellent motives and considerable achievements of many of the kings, and the patriotism of which they sometimes became a symbol, were alien growths. It is unlikely that they will be revived, or if they are revived that they will last.

The head of the state in Poland and Czechoslovakia is a President of the Republic. Both are elected for seven years by the parliament. The Polish President's powers are substantially the same as under the 1921 constitution.<sup>1</sup> He is in effect bound to act as government and parliament wish. The Czechoslovak President has greater powers. He may dissolve the Assembly, appoint both the Premier and individual ministers, preside over cabinet meetings, and require reports both from the government as a whole and from individual ministers. These powers are not, however, likely to cause difficulty as long as the presidency is held by Gottwald and the government is controlled by the Communist Party of which he is chairman. If the presidency should fall vacant, it is temporarily held in Poland by the Speaker, in Czechoslovakia by the cabinet as a whole, which may delegate specific powers to the Premier.

In Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Albania there is no single head of state. The function is collectively performed by the Presidium of the Assembly.

All seven countries have legislative assemblies elected by direct,

<sup>1</sup> This office has been held, since its creation, by Bierut, on whom see above, p. 155.

equal, secret and universal suffrage. Yugoslavia is the only country with a bicameral legislature. The second chamber, like that of the U.S.S.R., is based on nationality. The six republics, the autonomous region Voivodina and the autonomous province Kosovo-Metohija, are represented respectively by thirty, twenty and fifteen members each in it. Its title is Council of Peoples. The principal chamber, the Federal Council, is elected in the usual manner by territorial constituencies. In Czechoslovakia there is only one central legislature, but there is also a subordinate regional legislature for Slovakia, elected directly by the Slovak voters. The Polish, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Albanian legislatures are unicameral. In all seven countries the cabinet is formed from a majority in the legislature and is responsible to it.

The legislature also elects from its number a body called the Presidium, modelled on the institution of the same name in the Soviet constitution. It consists of a president, several vice-presidents, a secretary, and a number of members varying in different countries.<sup>1</sup> It performs the functions of the legislature when the legislature is not in session. Since the sessions of the legislatures are, as in the U.S.S.R., only for a short period each year, the presidium enacts a large number of decrees. These later have to be ratified by the full assembly. Since the elimination by the summer of 1948 of all parliamentary opposition, the assemblies have become mere meeting-places at which prominent supporters of the regime have opportunities to try their hand at popular democratic rhetoric. What powers belong to them by the constitution are in fact exercised for the greater part of the year by the presidiums.

Apart from this, and in addition to the functions of head of state, the presidium also has powers of interpreting the constitutionality of laws. In the case of Yugoslavia, the presidium may dissolve parliament if there is a disagreement between the two chambers. It may also decide whether laws passed by the governments of the constituent republics are in conformity with federal laws and with the federal constitution,<sup>2</sup> and whether institutions or economic enterprises should be administered by the republican or federal authorities. In Poland the powers of a presidium are

<sup>1</sup> In Czechoslovakia 24 members including the Speaker and the Deputy-Speaker of the Assembly; in Yugoslavia a President, six Vice-Presidents (one for each republic), a Secretary and not more than thirty members; in Bulgaria a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and fifteen members; in Rumania a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and fourteen members; in Hungary—where it is called a 'presidential council'—a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and seventeen members.

<sup>2</sup> On 'federalism' in Yugoslavia, see also below, p. 340.

held by the State Council. It is composed of the President of the Republic, the Speaker and Deputy-Speakers of the Assembly, the Chairman of the Supreme Auditing Board, and not more than three others elected by the Assembly at the unanimous request of the State Council itself. In time of war only, the commander-in-chief is also a member. The powers of the Czechoslovak presidium are more limited. It may not elect the President of the Republic or introduce constitutional amendments in any circumstances, and at times when the Assembly is not in session for normal reasons it may not extend military service, declare war, or create 'permanent charges on the state finances'.

Local government authorities—people's committees or people's councils—are also elected, at each administrative level. The pyramid of councils and committees corresponds to the pyramid of soviets in the constitution of the U.S.S.R. The Yugoslav committees are the only bodies whose origin resembles that of the Russian soviets. As we have seen, they were more or less democratic bodies created by the circumstances and needs of national and civil war. Only after the war was over were they emasculated and made subservient to the central government. The Czechoslovak committees, apart from abuses of power in certain areas, resembled local authorities in Western Europe until in February 1948 they were taken over by the communists. In the remaining five countries the committees or councils were born emasculated. They resemble the Russian soviets of the 1936 constitution, not the spontaneous and democratic soviets of 1905 or 1917. In this sense only, the statement of Rákosi that 'people's democracy is dictatorship of the proletariat without the soviet form' is true.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from providing the usual municipal or district services, the committees or councils are also the local executive authorities of central government departments. The executive committees of the local authorities, and the departments within them, are responsible not only to their own bodies and their electors, but also to the executives and departments of the authority at the next administrative level above them, and to the corresponding central ministries.

The judiciary is being brought steadily nearer to the Soviet model. In Yugoslavia judges are elected at each level, from the Supreme Court—elected by the federal legislature—down to the district courts—elected by the district people's committees. In Bulgaria and Rumania judges, who include professional judges

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 167–8. For the change in the functions of the Soviets in Russia see Rosenberg, *Geschichte des Bolschewismus*, and Towster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R.*

and lay assessors, are elected partly by people's committees and partly directly by the voters. In Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary the process did not get so far in 1949, but the importance of lay assessors was increasing. They were in practice nominees of the Communist Party. Throughout the region there has been steady pressure against pre-war professional judges, who are accused of reactionary prejudices, and of failure to act according to the spirit of popular democratic justice.<sup>1</sup> Some have been purged and others have been brought to heel. The whole legal profession has been reorganised. The activities of private lawyers have been ever more circumscribed. In Czechoslovakia district committees direct all lawyers, assign to them their clients, take from them their fees, and pay them a salary. In the other countries similar conditions exist.

An important office is that of Public Prosecutor. His task is to watch over the execution of the laws from the point of view of the government's interests. The Bulgarian public prosecutor has the 'particular duty to attend to the prosecution and punishment of crimes which affect the state, national and economic interests of the People's Republic, and crimes and actions detrimental to independence and national sovereignty'.<sup>2</sup> The tendency throughout Europe is, as in the U.S.S.R., to stress the interests of the state. Offences against state property are more severely punished than offences against private property. Disputes between private individuals are of minor importance in the legal system, but there is no essential reason why they should not be fairly judged. In disputes between an individual and the state, the weight of the law is on the side of the state.

All the constitutions have wide guarantees of civil liberties—speech, religion, association, meeting, inviolability of the home, right to work and leisure. They also contain clauses on the punishment of racial or nationalist hatred, and guarantee the right of minorities to use their own languages. But they also contain 'escape clauses' making these liberties inoperative if used against the government. For instance, Article 43 of the Yugoslav Constitution declares: 'It is illegal and punishable to use civil rights to change and infringe the constitutional order with an anti-

<sup>1</sup> A fairly representative example is the following statement by the Polish Minister of Justice in parliament on 28 February 1949: 'Inadequate understanding of the essence of the class struggle was demonstrated on occasions by the courts of justice which sometimes do not take into consideration the fundamental needs of the working class.'

<sup>2</sup> Bulgarian Constitution, Article 62.

democratic aim.' The Polish Declaration of Rights and Liberties, a fundamental law passed together with the provisional constitution, declares: 'Abuse of civil rights and liberties for the purpose of overthrowing the democratic form of government of the Republic of Poland shall be prevented by law.' Similar provisions are found in Section 37 of the Czechoslovak, Article 32 of the Rumanian and Article 87 of the Bulgarian constitutions. There are also special laws on 'Defence of the People's Power' and on 'espionage', which prescribe heavy penalties for a large variety of offences whose definition is conveniently elastic.<sup>1</sup>

From the first days of 'liberation' the Communist Parties paid great attention to the police. There were at first considerable local variations. In Poland, as in the U.S.S.R., a Ministry of Security was set up distinct from the Ministry of the Interior. In Rumania the communist under-secretary of the Premier's office, Bodnăraş, took over a special secret police organisation which had been created by King Carol II and managed it independently of the regular security police (Sigurantsa), which also had its own political section. In Hungary, a political department in the General Staff, led by Colonel Pálffy-Österreicher, performed political police duties in addition to the political department of police headquarters at No. 60 Andrásy Út.<sup>2</sup> In Czechoslovakia the counter-espionage department of the General Staff, under Colonel Reičin, performed police duties side by side with the People's Security Corps controlled by the communist Minister of the Interior Nosek.

Only in Yugoslavia have the political police actually relinquished some of their power. In a speech to the Central Committee of the Communist Party in June 1951, Minister Ranković admitted that the police had seriously abused their powers. Of all arrests made in 1949, as many as 47 per cent had been unlawful. A new code of law was introduced in 1951. It contained measures against arbitrary arrest and excessive reliance by the law courts on confessions.

Of little less importance than the political and security sections

<sup>1</sup> For instance, Article 10 of the Bulgarian 'Law for the Defence of the People's Power', passed 17 March 1945 and amended 19 April 1946, prescribes imprisonment up to ten years for rumours and statements which might 'impede economic life' or 'create mistrust' of governmental economic enterprises. Under the Czechoslovak law of 6 October 1948, offences include warmongering, attacks on friendly states, propagation of fascism 'or similar movements', 'false reports tending to create panic', and 'misuse of the priestly function to influence public life'.

<sup>2</sup> This street, named after one of Hungary's greatest nineteenth-century statesmen, and one of the best laid-out in this fine city, was renamed Stalin Street in honour of the seventieth birthday of the 'teacher of genius of all progressive humanity.'

of the police were the various forms of 'economic police'. Like their original model, the Russian Cheka, they specialised in the fight against 'speculation and the black market'. This fight was in practice used to catch out business men and shopkeepers in violation of some regulation, in order to confiscate their property without compensation and perhaps send them to forced labour. Great distinction was attained in this field by various 'special commissions' in Poland which were directed by the communist Zambrowski.

By 1950 it seems that the various police organisations were more systematically organised. It would be surprising if the police leaders were not advised by experts from the Soviet M.V.D., but exact information on this point is not available to the layman. The key positions in the police are now held by more or less reliable communists. As long as purges continue in the parties, there will always of course be a danger of purges in the police. The Ministries of the Interior of Hungary and Albania were both purged after the disgrace of Rajk and Xoxe.<sup>1</sup> If not always very intelligent, if suspicious to the point of inverted naivety, the East European communist political policemen are without doubt industrious and persevering. Their technique of producing the right plots and the right confessions at the right time must have earned them fair marks from their Soviet masters. Their dossiers, if not always accurate, are probably extensive. And their peoples live in terror of them.

Communist penetration of the armies also began early. The pre-war officers of the Polish army were almost completely removed by the course of the war. The nucleus of the new Polish army was formed by the officers of the three divisions which served under General Berling in the Red Army. Many were Poles who had lived for years in the U.S.S.R. The senior officers were for the most part Russians. The pre-war Yugoslav officers, mostly Serbs, were either taken prisoner in 1941 or associated with the Chetnik movement or Nedić. Only a few joined the partisans. The post-war Yugoslav army was formed by the expansion of the National Liberation Army created by Tito. Its officers were the leaders who had come to the fore during the resistance.

The Czechoslovak army was composed of two sections, which had fought respectively in the British and Soviet armies. In the first three years after the war there was steady but quiet discrimination against those who had been in Britain. After Feb-

<sup>1</sup> Pálffy-Österreicher was tried for treason at the same time as Rajk, and the Czech Colonel (later General) Reičin was arrested in 1951.

ruary 1948 it became outright persecution. Air-Marshal Janoušek was sentenced to eighteen years in prison for trying to leave the country. The most flagrant case was the judicial murder of General Heliodor Pika, who had served the exiled government first in Istanbul and then as head of the military mission in Moscow. He had won the hatred of Gottwald, Nějedly and company when he refused their blandishments to betray his government (with which of course the Soviet government had formal diplomatic relations) and serve their rival group. They enjoyed an ignoble revenge after the February police revolution. General Pika was arrested in 1948, tried for treason and espionage in February 1949, condemned to death and executed in June 1949. One of the accusations against him was that he had passed to the British in 1940 information about the Red Army. At that time Britain was his country's only fighting ally, the U.S.S.R. was the good friend of the German oppressors of the Czechs, and Gottwald, Nějedly and company were urging their compatriots to ignore the anti-German 'provocations' of the 'tool of the Western imperialists' Beneš.

An important stage in the communist penetration of the armies was the creation of 'political departments', which formed a hierarchy of political commissars such as has existed under various names ever since the formation of the Red Army in the U.S.S.R. In Rumania special units, the Tudor Vladimirescu and the Horia Cloșca Crișan divisions, were formed from prisoners-of-war indoctrinated in special political training camps in Russia.<sup>1</sup> Exiles who had served in the Red Army or in Spain returned to take important positions in their countries' new armies. Such were General Kinov in Bulgaria and General Świerczewski in Poland.<sup>2</sup> The Yugoslav generals included several Spanish veterans, but they rose to their positions by four years' liberation war in their own country, not through the ranks of the Soviet army.

In Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, the disarmament clauses of the peace treaties made it possible to purge selected officers, leaving behind those most reliable or malleable. By 1948, when purges and political commissars had done their work, it became possible once more to build up the armies. The leaders of the ex-

<sup>1</sup> Tudor Vladimirescu led a national and social revolt against the Turks and the Rumano-Greek big landowners in 1821. Horia, Cloșca and Crișan led a revolt of peasants in central Transylvania in 1784 against the ruling Hungarian aristocracy.

<sup>2</sup> Świerczewski, known in Spain as 'General Walter', was a prominent figure in the International Brigade. He was assassinated soon after his return to Poland by Ukrainian nationalists. General Kinov seems to have fallen into disfavour, possibly as a 'nationalist deviationist', in 1949.

enemy states began to speak of the need for strong armies. Though sure figures are not obtainable, the British and American governments believed, on the basis of information from their official sources, that the Bulgarian army in 1948 already exceeded the provisions of the peace treaties.<sup>1</sup> It may be expected that the supply of trained Rumanian and Hungarian cannon-fodder will also be increased.

Taken at their face value, the constitutional documents do not show a despotic state. If applied in a different spirit, which would give reality to the civil liberties, and free elections, they could provide extremely democratic government. The reason why this is not the case is that all power is in fact held by the Communist Parties. At elections only communists and approved sympathisers have any chance of being elected. Key positions, not only in the cabinet and upper administration but also in the executive committees and departments of local government bodies, are held by communists. Through the local government bodies the communists appoint the judges. The Public Prosecutor jealously watches over the action of the courts, and he too is chosen by the communists. Another important instrument is the State Control Commission, also modelled on Soviet experience.<sup>2</sup> Its task is to examine the efficiency and honesty of the administration and to investigate reports of abuses submitted to it by official bodies or individual citizens. In practice it shows less zeal for the defence of the citizen against bureaucratic abuse than for the interests of the government against both private individuals and subordinate officials. In it too the key positions are held by communists. If the state controls the citizen, the party controls the state.

#### THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

The Communist Parties of Eastern Europe, as of other countries, are modelled on the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bevin stated in the House of Commons in March 1948 that British sources estimated the Bulgarian army (which by the peace treaty should not exceed 55,000) at 76,000, the frontier guards (*elite* troops based on the model of the 'frontier troops of the N.K.V.D.' in the U.S.S.R.) at 10,000, and the militia (police) at 80-100,000. American State Department sources in November 1948 estimated the army at 80,000, frontier guards at 12,000 and the portion of the militia possessing modern arms and equipment at 30,000—the whole militia force being of course very much larger. By the end of 1949 these figures have probably been considerably exceeded.

<sup>2</sup> The original Soviet institution was 'Workers' and Peasants' Inspection' (Rabkrin). It later became the People's Commissariat, then the Ministry, of State Control. A State Control Commission was introduced in Yugoslavia in April 1946, but abolished, on grounds of redundancy of personnel, in February 1951. The institution was adopted in Bulgaria in 1948, and in Rumania and Hungary in 1949.

the U.S.S.R., the descendant of the Bolshevik fraction in the Russian Social Democrat Party created by Lenin after 1903. Lenin's ideas on the relationship of the party to society and to the state, and on its internal organisation, are still valid.

Lenin's Bolshevik Party was intended to be a 'party of a new type'. Lenin as a disciple of Marx believed the industrial proletariat to be the class destined to lead the future socialist revolution. But the class itself required leadership. Revolutionaries must not follow the 'elemental' movement of the masses. They must lead the workers forward, must understand the interests of the workers better than the workers themselves, explain them to them and 'politically educate' them. The party must be the 'vanguard of the proletariat', an *élite* of professional revolutionaries wholly devoted to the cause of the revolution, closely studying the technique of power and building up a theory of the seizure of power. Lenin's Bolsheviks did their best to conform to this model, and when war shattered the imperial Russian state they proved more efficient at seizing power than rival revolutionaries. The experience of the Bolshevik Party was made the foundation for the Communist Parties of other countries, which were set up when the Communist Third International (Comintern) was founded in 1919. The principles of organisation and action for all Communist Parties were laid down in the Twenty-one Conditions of the Comintern's second congress, held in 1920.<sup>1</sup>

Between the world wars the Communist Parties outside the U.S.S.R. were rebels working to undermine the structure of the state and to bring about revolution in their respective countries. They did their best to conform to the Bolshevik model, whether they were fighting democratic Western governments, fascist dictatorships or East European bureaucratic despotisms. Meanwhile in the Soviet Union itself the communists were no longer rebels. Having solved the problem of seizing power, they became experts in the maintenance of power. Here the merit belongs to Stalin, General Secretary and thus principal organiser of the party, and after Lenin's death the ruler of Russia.<sup>2</sup> The party remained the vanguard and the *élite*. Its members held the key positions at all levels in the executive organs of the state, in the

<sup>1</sup> For the main points of the Twenty-one Conditions, see Borkenau, *The Communist International*, or Walter, *Histoire du parti communiste français*. The full text of the speeches at the congress is not easily obtainable in this country.

<sup>2</sup> The use by Stalin of his position as General Secretary is brilliantly described in Deutscher, *Stalin, a Political Biography*.

industrial machine, and in the mass organisations such as trade unions, youth movement, women's association and co-operatives. In Article 126 of Stalin's constitution of 1936 the party is described as 'the directing nucleus of all organisations of the toilers in society and state'.

Whether in opposition or in power, all Communist Parties are organised on the principle of 'democratic centralism'. Party officers are elected by members at each level, the party's supreme authority is the congress of delegates which assembles at stated intervals, and issues of policy should be discussed within the party before decisions are taken. But between congresses the Central Committee and its Political Bureau take the decisions and pass the orders downwards, and every member is obliged to carry out the orders without question, even if before the decision was taken he was of a different opinion. This system could in theory provide effective control by members over the leaders. It was probably the intention of Lenin, and certainly that of Trotsky, that democracy and centralism should be equally balanced. But in the era of Stalin there is no doubt that the centralism has reduced the democracy to small proportions. Exactly how small it is difficult for a non-communist to say. In general, however, extreme centralism, or intra-party dictatorship, characterised not only the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. under Stalin's leadership, but also the foreign Communist Parties which were rigorously subjected to the orders of the Comintern.

While they were in opposition the East European Communist Parties followed the example of the Bolsheviks under Tsarist rule. Stalin's peculiar version of the history of Russian Bolshevism—the *Short History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*—published in 1938, was a bible for leaders and members alike. In the first period after 'liberation' they modelled themselves on the tactics of the Bolsheviks between March and November 1917. But, as their leaders have publicly admitted, their position was made easier for them by the overwhelming power of the U.S.S.R. in Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> They did not need to show much skill in order to get power. Finally, once they had definitely broken the opposition of all rival parties, they copied Stalin's methods of exercising power. The new constitutions do not, like that of the U.S.S.R., mention the Communist Party. The reason for this is no doubt that the Soviet leaders do not consider these countries yet sufficiently 'advanced' to have earned a constitution completely

<sup>1</sup> See quotation from Rákosi, above, pp. 167-8.

identical with that of the Soviet Union. When political sovietisation has been followed by the completion of economic and social sovietisation, more 'advanced' constitutions will probably be needed, and the question of formal incorporation in the U.S.S.R. may be considered. But meanwhile the East European Communist Parties have adopted the Stalinist methods of infiltration of state and society. They are already 'directing nuclei', controlling the organs of public administration, factory managements, boards of co-operatives, trade unions and youth and women's organisations. .

The leaders of the East European Communist Parties are a mixture of revolutionary heroes and martyrs and Stalinist bureaucrats. The most distinguished veteran is Matthias Rákosi, of Hungary. He was already a People's Commissar in the Hungarian communist government of 1919, and was later a delegate of the Comintern at important communist congresses in Italy and Germany. Kolarov, of Bulgaria, was a prominent Comintern figure already in the twenties. His compatriot George Dimitrov attained eminence later, as a result of his brilliant defence at the Reichstag fire trial in Leipzig in 1933. Lesser figures who have spent long periods in emigration in Moscow are Vlko Chervenkov (Dimitrov's brother-in-law) and Vladimir Poptomov of Bulgaria, Anna Pauker and Emil Bodnăraş of Rumania, Klement Gottwald and Zdeněk Nějedly of Czechoslovakia, and most of the leaders of the Polish party. Among the martyrs are Rákosi and Vas of Hungary, who spent sixteen years in prison, Gheorghiu-Dej of Rumania (ten years), Mosha Piade of Yugoslavia (fourteen years), Dobri Tarpeshev of Bulgaria (fourteen years). Thousands of East European communists served shorter terms, and were beaten or severely tortured in prison. Traicho Kostov of Bulgaria threw himself out of the window of police headquarters in Sofia because he feared that he could not resist further torture to make him reveal the names of his comrades. Both his legs were broken, but he was restored to health to serve his prison sentence, return to revolutionary activity, and be again arrested, maltreated and imprisoned.<sup>1</sup> Among the heroes of resistance the first place is of course taken by the Yugoslav leaders. The Bulgarian Yugov also led resistance during the war. The Albanian communist leaders were mostly active resisters. The leaders of the other parties

<sup>1</sup> When Kostov was tried for treason in December 1949, communist journalists, inspired by the noble conception of popular democratic justice, which consists in heaping insult on the accused while the case is being tried, mocked him because he was a hunchback. His deformity dated from his torture in prison.

were mostly in exile, and the struggle was carried on by communists of the second rank.

It would be unfair to suggest that the communist exiles had a cushioned existence in Russia while their comrades suffered at home. Exile in Russia had its perils, as was shown by the case of the Polish communist leaders, who during the great Soviet purges of 1936-7 were 'unmasked' as Trotskyists and disappeared. The communist exiles worked hard, and took their duties as a planning staff as seriously as had Lenin in his exile years.<sup>1</sup> But just as in the Soviet Union of the thirties deep differences of mentality appeared between the old Bolsheviks and the younger men who had grown up after the revolution was made, so the outlook of the communist exiles accustomed to the workings of Soviet bureaucracy differed from that of the underground revolutionaries in their home countries. The difference in this respect between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is that in the first the revolutionaries were the older men and the bureaucrats the younger, while in the second the bureaucrats were the veterans and the rebels were the young enthusiasts. The difference in outlook became very important in Eastern Europe in the stage of party consolidation which followed the establishment of political power.

In the first period after 'liberation', the period of struggle for political power, the communists set out to recruit new members as quickly as possible. Quantity was more important than quality. Recruits were of several main types. First were the idealists, attracted by the communist ideology and programme as far as they understood them. To them the communists stood for social transformation and justice, and for a broad national unity of all good patriots and democrats. They also believed in the heroism and nobility of the great Soviet people whose army had destroyed fascism. Then there were the opportunists, who saw in communism the 'movement of the future' and in the U.S.S.R. the world's greatest Power. In many, idealism and opportunism were

<sup>1</sup> The words 'emigration' and 'exile' are inconsistently used by Communist propaganda. Up till 1914 emigration and exile were considered by revolutionaries an honourable condition. This was especially true of the Russian and Polish emigrations, to the first of which of course Lenin belonged for many years. Again in the fascist era, exile was considered by the left, including the communists an honourable state. But during the Second World War the words were used by communist propaganda as terms of abuse against the Polish and Yugoslav governments in exile and their armed forces. They were used to recall the French 'émigrés' of Coblenz of 1792, reactionaries waiting to be brought back to power by foreign bayonets. Yet that is how, after the Second World War, the émigrés in Russia were brought back to power. Dimitrov, Rákosi and Gottwald are outstanding examples.

mixed. Many industrial workers not only sympathised with the party programme, but also felt that the Communist Party was 'their party', the party for which a worker should automatically vote simply because he is a worker.

Three special categories, whose allegiance to communism might seem unexpected, played an important part. The first were officials and professional people with a definitely conservative background, who were in some way compromised—by association with Germans or fascists, or by some moral or financial offence—and could be blackmailed into subservience to the communists who knew their record.

The second were minor fascists. The most eminent fascists could hardly be admitted into the Communist Parties, but their followers who had been 'misled' by fascist demagoguery could, it was argued, be given another chance. Some of these recruits from fascism to communism were genuine converts: they had followed fascism because they believed its vague promises of social revolution, and now saw better prospects in communism. Others were former fascist toughs who enjoyed a brawl or an opportunity to beat their fellow-citizens: they had beaten 'leftists' on behalf of fascists, and were now cheerfully willing to beat 'reactionaries' on behalf of communists. There is no doubt that large numbers of former Hungarian Arrow Cross men and Rumanian Iron Guardists joined the Communist Parties. This did not prevent the Hungarian and Rumanian communist leaders from protesting with self-righteous indignation whenever they found an ex-fascist in the ranks of the Hungarian Small Farmers' Party or the Rumanian National Peasant Party.

The third category were a number of bureaucrats in key positions. They and the communists were temporarily and practically useful to each other. The larger the number of bureaucrats prepared in a crisis to obey the Communist Party's orders, the easier and quicker would be the communist seizure of power. And for the individual bureaucrat membership of the Communist Party was at least a temporary personal reinsurance.

An important stage in the development of the Communist Parties was fusion with the Social Democrat Parties. Ever since the foundation of the Comintern, Communist Parties have had three tactics, which they have applied at different times to their rivals in the working-class movement—the 'united front from below', the 'popular front', and 'organic unity'.

'United front from below' was based on appeals to the

membership of the Socialist Parties to abandon their leaders and transfer their allegiance to the communist leaders, the 'only true revolutionary leadership'.

The 'popular front' was an alliance between Communist and Socialist—and if possible also non-socialist—Parties, including both leaders and supporters. But though the popular front tactic required communist leaders to co-operate with socialist leaders against a common enemy—fascism or a foreign invader—it did not mean that the communists abandoned their aim of disrupting the Socialist Parties and winning away their following. On the contrary, the close association between the parties was used to improve opportunities for undermining.

Finally, when conditions were most favourable, the policy of 'organic unity' was adopted. This aimed at complete fusion of the two workers' parties. Stress was laid on the common interests of all workers against all capitalists, and on the disastrous effects of the split in the workers' ranks in the twenties and thirties, which had so greatly contributed to the rise to power of Hitler. The split was of course attributed to the wickedness of the social democrats, not to the ineptitude of the communists.

The aim of all three tactics was of course the same, to destroy the Socialist Parties as rivals for working-class support, and to establish complete communist control over the labour movements.

From Hitler's invasion of Russia until the autumn of 1947 the Communist Parties in Eastern Europe, as also in other parts of the world, pursued a popular front tactic. The change was marked by the creation of the Cominform. After this the communists began strong pressure on the social democrats for organic unity. The stages by which this process took place in Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland has been described above. It must be emphasised that the 'workers' unity' thus achieved was not unity but conquest. The Social Democratic Party machines were simply seized by the communists. According to official communist statements the result was achieved by persuasion and 'political education'. The masses of both parties were convinced of the necessity of union, and of the superiority of 'scientific Marxist-Leninist ideology'. The truth, however, is that socialists who showed reluctance to hand over their party to the communist clique were forcibly ejected from the Social Democrat Party by its official leaders, the willing puppets of the communists. Unity was achieved not by free discussion but by police methods.

All socialists who did not unconditionally submit to communist

dictation were denounced as 'right-wingers' and traitors to the workers' movement. In fact most of these men—such as the Łódź branch of the Polish party, or the Minister of Industry of Hungary, Antal Bán—belonged definitely to the left. Their faults were not that they were right-wing, but that they wished to preserve the independent organisation of parties more than fifty years old, with traditions and prestige of their own, and that they still wished to maintain some contacts with the Socialist Parties of Western Europe, even though they often strongly disagreed with the policy of the latter. But nothing less than complete subjection would satisfy the communists, so they had to go. After a whole series of purges, the Social Democrat Parties were at last considered ripe for fusion.

In the new united parties the key positions were held by communists and the new statutes were faithful copies of the statute of the Soviet Communist Party. At the 'unifying' congresses the social democrat speakers were compelled to make humiliating attacks on the past history of their own parties and to pour forth abject adulation of the Soviet leaders. The Polish socialist Cyrankiewicz stated at the Polish unity congress in December 1948: 'The congress is the greatest event in Poland since Kościusko's rising.' And again: 'Following P.P.R.'s example, P.P.S. has evolved a programme of struggle for social and national liberation.' Polish socialism, with its half-century of bitter struggle against foreign and domestic oppression, had learned its duty from the puppet party set up by the Soviet authorities in 1942!

'Unification' was followed by further purges. Having eliminated all organised opposition, the communists now began to purge their ranks. Quantity of members was now less important than quality. Much greater attention was paid to 'mastery of Marxist-Leninist theory and methodology' by party members. The social origin of members was also examined more carefully: it was important that industrial workers should form a large proportion, and that there should not be too many former bourgeois. Stress was also laid on the moral duties of communists. In particular, they must be sober, sexually irreproachable and hard-working. Control commissions were set up by the party all over the country. They were composed of party members, but they could when they wished call non-party witnesses to give evidence on the record of party members appearing before them.

In Hungary about 17 per cent of the party's membership was

removed, but some were allowed to become 'candidates'. After a period of probation, their readmission would be considered. In Rumania the results were similar. The most inflated party was the Czechoslovak. At the ninth congress, held in May 1949, the general secretary Slansky stated that membership had risen from 1,159,164 in 1946 to 2,311,060 at the time of the congress. It is clear that this increase was the result of the recruiting campaign before and immediately after the 'revolution' of February 1948. It had obviously brought many unreliable opportunists into the party ranks. As a result of the 'verification' in Czechoslovakia, 522,685 members had been made into 'candidates'. The period of probation was to be one year for workers and two years for others. Only 107,133 persons were definitely expelled from the party. At the time of the congress Slansky stated that the proportion of workers among party members was 45 per cent, but had been 57 per cent in 1946. The Albanian party was more successful in increasing the percentage of workers. According to the report of its organising secretary, Tuk Jakova, at its congress in November 1948, workers had increased from 15 per cent of the membership in 1945 to 23 per cent in 1948, poor peasants from 25 per cent to 54 per cent. On the other hand other peasants had declined from 22 per cent to 13 per cent, and middle-class elements from 37 per cent to 10 per cent.

The communist leaders made statements that the purge must not be regarded as a measure of punishment. Its purpose had been only to improve the quality of the parties. Those expelled from the party must not necessarily be dismissed from their jobs. They could 'serve the cause of socialism' outside the party.

The Yugoslav party was always in a special situation. It had been stronger before the war than any except the Bulgarian and Czech. Many of its most experienced members had been killed in battle. Their places had been taken, and the party's numbers greatly expanded, by members of the partisan forces. The war of liberation had no doubt been insufficient as a school of Marxist-Leninist ideology, but it had been a good training-ground in loyalty, courage and discipline. At the end of the war the Yugoslav party was certainly superior in the average quality of its members to any of the other East European Communist Parties. After liberation members were recruited slowly. The leaders were not keen to dilute their *élite*. The mass recruiting was done by the People's Front, the communist-controlled 'monolithic' monopoly political organisation. The party itself kept in the background.

This was in fact one of the things with which the Cominform reproached the Yugoslav leaders in 1948.

The second difference between the Yugoslav party and those of neighbouring countries lay in the nature of its leaders. Most of them had been in the U.S.S.R. only for short periods or not at all. Tito himself had of course spent many years there. He had been a professional Comintern agent, performing missions in several European countries. His last assignment from the Comintern had been to return to Yugoslavia in 1937 and reorganise the party, which had been seriously infected with 'Trotskyism' and 'sectarianism'. He fulfilled this task efficiently, bringing the purged underground party into line with Moscow's wishes. But then came the war. Tito and his colleagues were cut off from Moscow. They had to make decisions for themselves, to work out a military and political strategy suited to their circumstances. They were successful, and in the process Tito became a great national figure, a symbol of Yugoslav patriotism. Moreover he came into contact with British officers. No Soviet N.K.V.D. representative was present at his interviews with Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean. How could Moscow know what sinister effects this contamination by Western capitalism may have had on him? There can be little doubt that Moscow's suspicion of the Yugoslav leaders dates from this time. And in a sense Moscow may have been right. It was difficult for a man who had become a national hero to revert after victory to his former role of humble Comintern agent. It was difficult for men who had joined the Communist Party in war, because it had seemed to them to lead all the forces working for a new, revolutionary and great Yugoslavia, to accept subordination of their country to another, even if that other was both 'brotherly Russia' and 'the land of socialism'.

The Soviet leaders seem to have believed, when they used the Cominform to launch anathema at Tito, that the great love of the Yugoslav people for Russia and for the Soviet Union would surge up against the 'Tito Trotskyist-nationalist clique', that the 'healthy Marxist forces' would overthrow the government. But they were wrong. Tito and his friends had built up by their own efforts, in times of great suffering and danger, a powerful machine. This machine now loyally served them.

The creation of Cominform in the late summer of 1947 was Moscow's reply to the Marshall Plan. It marked the formal end of the popular front in home affairs and of 'Big Four co-operation' in foreign policy. The tasks of Cominform were to consolidate

communist power in Eastern Europe and to intensify communist political warfare in Western Europe, through the two strongest western Communist Parties, the French and the Italian, both of which belonged to Cominform. Besides this, it was intended to give an appearance of democratic equality among Communist Parties, for the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) was only one among nine. In fact the statement of denunciation of Tito, and the correspondence between the Soviet and Yugoslav parties published as a consequence, showed clearly both that the Cominform was more than an information bureau, and that the directives which it gave to member parties came to it from the Soviet party.

Consolidation of communist power in Eastern Europe was interpreted in practice as increased subjection of the parties to Moscow. In 1948 and 1949 purges of 'nationalist deviationists' took place in most East European countries. These purges corresponded to the victory within the party leaderships of the 'Muscovites' over the wartime resistance leaders.

Already before the Tito-Cominform breach, the prominent Rumanian communist Pătrășcanu had been disgraced for nationalism. His special fault was intolerance towards the Hungarian minority in Transylvania, but it was also generally believed that he was in disagreement with the 'Muscovite' leadership of the party. Pătrășcanu was a middle-class intellectual, a distinguished writer and social historian. He had several times been in prison, but he had not lived in exile in the U.S.S.R. He was relieved of the post of Minister of Justice in February 1948 and was later expelled from the party. His case was described as follows by the party leader Gheorghiu-Dej: 'Some underestimate the enemy's forces and over-estimate working-class forces . . . become exponents of bourgeois ideology, and detach themselves from the masses and from the ideology and principles of the working class, as has happened with comrade Pătrășcanu'.

The next case after Tito occurred in Poland. Here the victim was Gomułka (known by his underground pseudonym of 'Wiesław'). Accused of 'insufficient appreciation of the role of the U.S.S.R.', he formally repented at a meeting of the Central Committee of the party in August 1948. But at the 'unification' congress in December 1948 he was accused of 'ignoring the struggle against nationalism'. 'Comrade Wiesław'—to quote the words of the congress delegate Kliszko—'has returned to his old nationalist position . . . and cancelled his own self-critical state-

ment'. Gomulka had already been deprived of the general secretaryship of the party, which was taken over by President Bierut. He now lost the humbler post of Minister of Public Administration, to which he had been relegated.

The 'unmasking' and later execution of the Albanian communist Koci Xoxe belongs generally to the purge against the 'nationalist deviation'. But the Xoxe case was especially connected with Albanian-Yugoslav relations, and is discussed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

The next important victim was the Bulgarian Vice-Premier and former secretary of the underground Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Traicho Kostov. His fault too lay in insufficient appreciation of the role of the Soviet Union and nationalist demagogy. He was also accused of 'left-wing sectarianism'. Later it appeared that he had withheld information from the Soviet authorities on Bulgaria's trade relations with other countries, and had applied the laws on state secrets to the U.S.S.R. as to other countries. He had failed to understand that the Soviet Union is not as other countries, is incapable of imperialism, and is always benevolent to Bulgaria. In the words of George Dimitrov, Kostov was guilty of the 'shameful assumption' that Soviet interests might ever be opposed to Bulgarian interests. Kostov was first removed from his important positions and then placed on trial for treason. He was accused of being a British agent, and of having saved his life when under arrest in 1942 by betraying his comrades. To the rage and astonishment of his judges, he refused, at his trial in December 1949, to confess to these crimes. He was condemned and executed.

The next case was that of Rajk, former Minister of the Interior in Hungary. He too was not a 'Muscovite', having never spent a period of exile in the U.S.S.R. He had been the leader of what little communist underground activity there had been in Hungary in 1944.<sup>2</sup> He had shown exemplary devotion to the party in 'unmasking' the 1947 'conspiracy', and producing the appropriate confessions at the right moment. Now suddenly he was not only accused of the 'nationalist deviation', but was roundly denounced as an 'agent of the imperialists'. In preparation of the trial, to be conducted according to the true 'popular democratic justice', the party organised a flood of 'spontaneous' telegrams from the 'toilers' of town and country demanding a 'rope for the traitor Rajk'. At the trial, which took place in September 1949, he obligingly confessed to all the charges, of which the most important were that he had plotted with Marshal Tito on behalf

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 228-9.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 104.

of the American secret service, and that already before 1939 he had been an agent of Horthy's political police. His service in the republican army in Spain had been an act of 'provocation', undertaken at the orders of the police. Rajk was duly condemned and hanged.

The largest and most heterogeneous of the communist parties was the Czechoslovak. The purge came later here than in neighbouring countries. At the end of 1949 the editor of the party newspaper *Rude Pravo*, Novy, was dismissed from his job. In February 1950 he was expelled from the party. In May 1950, at a congress of the Slovak Communist Party, the leading communists Clementis, Smidke, Husak and Novomesky were accused of nationalist deviationism. The wickedness of Clementis was enhanced by the rediscovery of the fact—hitherto conveniently ignored—that in September 1939 he had disapproved of the German-Soviet Pact. As Vice-Premier Siroky told the congress, Clementis had forgotten that 'for a Communist there is a rule which must be observed at all times and especially in difficult circumstances—unreserved confidence in the Soviet Union and the great Stalin', who ' . . . at all times and in all places conduct a policy designed to one end alone—the good of the international working class movement and the fight against imperialism'. In February 1951 it was announced that Clementis had been arrested as an imperialist spy, together with the party secretary for the Moravian capital Brno, Otto Sling, and a prominent woman communist, Madame Svermova. In September the General Secretary of the party, Rudolf Slansky, was removed from his post, and in November he was arrested for treason. This was the most sensational disgrace of a communist since the fall of Kostov. It was the more surprising in that Slansky, far from being a 'nationalist', was usually considered the most docile 'Muscovite' in his party.

The effect of 'Titoism' in Eastern Europe is probably greater than at first sight appears. It is true that there is little immediate prospect of a 'Titoist' revolt elsewhere. The factor mainly responsible both for the origin of the Cominform-Tito breach and for the subsequent survival of Tito is absent in the other countries. This factor is the existence of a military and civil state machine not immediately dependent on Moscow. Tito created his own machine during the war of liberation. The machines of the other East European regimes were created by, or under the close supervision of, Soviet officers and 'political experts'. In the improbable event that Gottwald, Bierut, Pauker or Chervenkov should wish

to revolt against Moscow, they would not be able to rely on soldiers or bureaucrats whose loyalty was to them rather than to Stalin. Nevertheless the example of Tito, and the ruthless counter-measures taken on Moscow's orders, will have made an impression on the members of the East European communist parties. It must now be clear to many of them that the first requirement of a communist is unconditional subservience to Soviet imperialism. Terror and blackmail, not loyalty or idealism, are the means by which Moscow maintains its hold over the communist parties, and through them over the peoples, of Eastern Europe. Yet a time may come when Moscow will need loyalty and idealism. Then it may have some unpleasant surprises.

In the Soviet Union, purges of one 'deviation' have often been followed by purges of its opposite. It is unlikely that 'nationalism' will be the only heresy requiring treatment in the East European communist parties. Cominform propaganda has for some time stressed the connection between two sins which at first sight appear hardly compatible, nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Both are instruments of the western imperialists for the demoralisation of the Soviet and the popular democratic world. The first consists of exaggerating the importance of one's own country at the expense of the great Soviet Union: the second is the belief in any supranational culture, transcending the culture of any single nation, even that of the great Soviet nation. Both heresies arise from a petty-bourgeois mentality, and both 'objectively play the game of the imperialists'. The purge of cosmopolitans has been very thorough in the Soviet Union in recent months, and its victims have consisted to a striking extent of Jews—a community whose whole history of course inclines them towards this heresy. The leadership of the Communist Parties of Poland and Hungary is very largely of Jewish origin, and influential Jewish communists in other countries include Anna Pauker and Chişinevschi in Rumania. The disgrace of Slansky—the only Jew to hold an eminent place in the Czechoslovak Communist Party—and the disappearance of Geminder, a Jew who represented the Czechoslovak Communist Party in its relations with the Cominform—are perhaps of some significance in this context.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE GREEK EXCEPTION

#### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

IN October 1944, when British troops entered Greece, the greater part of the country was in the hands of E.L.A.S. Had the communists wished to seize power in Athens at this time they could easily have done so. They chose otherwise. They joined in the welcome given to the British forces by the population of Athens. But less than two months later the British forces and E.L.A.S. were at war.

The explanation seems to be that in October the Greek communists hoped to obtain power by peaceful infiltration. They no doubt underestimated the determination of the non-E.A.M. members of the government to prevent this, and overestimated the influence of left opinion in Britain, and of the Soviet government, on British policy. It is also likely that, as Colonel Woodhouse, head of the British Mission in Greece in 1943-4, suggests,<sup>1</sup> they believed themselves to enjoy greater sympathy among the British military authorities than was in fact the case. However this may be, by the end of November they found themselves faced with the alternatives of peacefully abandoning their means of power, or fighting for them. They chose the latter, and began to make preparations, of which the most important was to bring in E.L.A.S. formations from the provinces to Athens.

The issue on which fighting broke out was the proposed disarmament of the guerrilla forces. These were to be replaced by a National Guard, to be formed by calling up one class of the pre-war army reserve. The selection of officers for this Guard was one of the points of conflict between E.A.M. and non-E.A.M. ministers. Another was the future of the two regular Greek military formations, the 3rd (Rimini) Brigade and the Sacred Squadron. The communists argued that if all political armed forces were disbanded, then these two formations should also be disbanded. Their opponents, with the support of the British Command, replied that as regular army units they must be

<sup>1</sup> Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord*, pp. 210-3.

preserved. A compromise was suggested, that the two regular units should be retained, but that E.L.A.S. should be allowed to keep a nucleus of a numerical strength equal to the two, and that Zervas should also keep a force proportionate to his numbers. This meant that E.L.A.S. would be outnumbered, and the modern equipment of the regular units made its effective inferiority even greater. The E.A.M. ministers, however, accepted the compromise on 27 November, only to reject it two days later, and repeat their demand for the disbandment of the brigade and the squadron. At this point General Scobie, the British commander, whom both the Greek government and E.L.A.S. had recognised as Commander-in-Chief of all Greek forces by the Caserta agreement, ordered both E.L.A.S. and Zervas to disarm by 10 December. Zervas accepted, but the E.L.A.S. commander Sarafis refused, on the ground that such an order must come through the Greek government, and that the Greek government, which included E.A.M. ministers, had not issued an order. On 2 December the E.A.M. ministers resigned. They obtained permission from the government to hold a demonstration in Athens the next day, mobilised the E.L.A.S. reserve of Athens and Piraeus, and ordered a general strike for 4 December. At the last moment the permission for the demonstration was cancelled, too late for instructions to reach all the groups taking part. On the morning of 3 December the demonstrations took place, the crowds broke through the police cordon and reached the centre of Athens, Constitution Square, where police in a panic opened fire.

This was E.L.A.S.'s opportunity. The Greek government and police were massacrers of the innocent. The E.L.A.S. military committee in the Athens area ordered attacks on all police stations. Captured policemen were shot. Some police stations were relieved later in the day by British troops, on whom E.L.A.S. did not fire. A battle took place between E.L.A.S. and the right-wing extremists known as 'X', in the neighbourhood of the Theseum. On 4 December Papandreou wanted to resign. The liberal leader Sophoulis was prepared to form a government, and E.A.M. expressed its willingness to serve under him. But the British government considered that this would be capitulation to violence, and Mr. Churchill urged Papandreou to remain at his post. Scobie ordered E.L.A.S. to withdraw from Athens and Peiraeus within seventy-two hours. On 6 December British aircraft attacked E.L.A.S. positions, and in the following days British troops became engaged with E.L.A.S. forces on land.

It was soon clear that the British had underestimated E.L.A.S. strength. More than two British divisions had to be withdrawn from Italy and sent to reinforce the beleaguered British forces. By the end of the month E.L.A.S. was losing. On Christmas Day Churchill and Eden flew to Athens, and started discussions between Greek political leaders. King George II of Greece was persuaded in London to agree to the appointment as Regent of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens, whose honourable record during the occupation had won universal respect. On 3 January a new government was formed under General Plastiras. By 5 January E.L.A.S. began to withdraw from Athens, on the 11th their delegates reached agreement for an armistice with Scobie, and on 15 January fighting ceased. A month later, on 12 February, a political agreement was signed at Varkiza between the government and the communists. E.L.A.S. was to disarm, there was to be an amnesty for political offenders but not for criminal offences, and a purge of the civil service to remove collaborators with the Germans. A new army was to be created by the mobilisation of age-groups, but the Rimini Brigade and Sacred Squadron were to be retained under arms. Finally, a plebiscite was to be held as soon as possible to decide whether Greece should be a monarchy or a republic, and this was to be followed by elections to a Constituent Assembly.

It was a tragedy that British troops should have fought against Greeks, especially against those who had most actively resisted the Italians and Germans during the occupation. It was all the more horrible as the war against the common enemy was far from finished. The indignation expressed in the House of Commons and a large part of the British press reflected the genuine dismay of British opinion. It cannot be dismissed as the work of 'fellow-travellers' and 'sentimentalists'.

Events in the rest of Eastern Europe since 1944 have shown what kind of regime Greece would have had if E.L.A.S. and the Communist Party had had a free hand. For two reasons at least there should be satisfaction in Britain that they did not. One is that a totalitarian regime would have been imposed on the Greek people, which of all peoples in Europe is perhaps the most opposed to dictatorship, especially in the intellectual and cultural fields. Some indication of how communist rule would have begun was given by the massacres of hostages which E.L.A.S. committed during its days of power in Athens. The corpses, in many cases mutilated, of murdered men and women, including besides some

'collaborators' a large number of innocent and harmless persons, were found after the E.L.A.S. withdrawal. The second reason is that the triumph of E.L.A.S. would have extended the Soviet bloc far into the Eastern Mediterranean, including Crete and the Dodecanese, and threatened the Middle East. It is indeed probable that this was the main consideration affecting Mr. Churchill's policy. A Soviet threat to British interests did not at that time seriously alarm most British people, who thought of the U.S.S.R. as a gallant ally. But the events of the last five years have shown it in a different light.

British troops prevented the Greek communists from seizing power. Without British intervention the anti-communist forces would have been as helpless as were the anti-communist forces in Yugoslavia and Albania. Looking back in 1950 one must be thankful that British intervention took place. But there is another question less easy to answer. Could a wiser British policy towards Greece during the period of occupation and resistance have prevented the tragic situation of 1944 from ever arising? It is of course naive to suggest that the British, by being more friendly to E.A.M.-E.L.A.S., could have taken control of that movement out of communist hands. The movement was in fact led and organised by communists from the very beginning. A more serious argument is that the devotion of British policy to King George II, who was without doubt unpopular in Greece after the Axis conquest, forced into the ranks of E.A.M.-E.L.A.S. many democratic Greeks who would have followed a non-communist democratic resistance movement if such had existed. Supporters of this view would not regard the movements of Zervas and Psaros as serious movements. That British support of the monarchy did to some extent have this result it is impossible to deny. If the British authorities concerned with the Greek resistance had been supermen, geniuses of organisation and political understanding, they might have organised an alternative resistance movement. But the real answer is surely that leadership must come from the Greeks themselves. The Greek non-communist democrats proved unwilling and unable to build up a great movement. Only the communists had the fanaticism and ruthless courage enabling them, regardless of suffering to themselves and the civil population, to build up an instrument for the ultimate seizure of power. If Greek non-communists could not do this, it is unreasonable to expect that the British should have done it for them.

Greece was saved from communist dictatorship, but she did not thereby attain democratic freedom. Inevitably the suppression of the extremists of the left encouraged the extremists of the right. The moderate democrats, it was now argued, could not protect the people against the communist danger: only a strong monarchy could do this. The royalists claimed that Greece could only choose between George II and communism: all attempts at a middle way would weaken the country. The extreme right in fact took over a large part of the country, and became the dominant force in army, national guard and police. Wartime membership of E.L.A.S. was regarded as a crime, any resistance record was suspect, collaboration with the Germans was condoned and service in the security battalions a merit. Personal spite and revenge often sufficed for a political programme. The governments in Athens, composed for the most part of genuine democrats, were not masters of the country. Plastiras tried to remedy the royalist predominance in the army by appointing his republican friends to leading positions. Here he came up against the opposition of the British Military Mission, which was reorganising the Greek army, and wished to keep it clear of politics. This principle, theoretically admirable, meant in practice that the political faction which had the greatest influence retained it: a non-political Greek officer is a very rare species.

In April 1945 Plastiras resigned. He was succeeded by a 'service ministry' under Admiral Voulgaris, a friend of the biggest Athens industrialist, Bodossakis Athanassiades. The new cabinet carried out a so-called 'decongestion of the prisons', releasing numbers of communist sympathisers who had been arrested without a serious charge against them. Release was not always a blessing. On returning to their village, they were liable to find the local right-wing toughs out for their blood. If they escaped this illegal vengeance, they went once more into hiding. In the Peloponnese several right-wing bands terrorised the countryside. The local administration took no action against them, both because they were afraid and because they sympathised with their avowed aim of extirpating communists. The National Guard was a very mixed lot, including besides ordinary decent citizens a fair sprinkling of right-wing extremists and of the natural Balkan toughs and bullies. A British police mission headed by Sir Charles Wickham was meanwhile facing the herculean task of training a professional, non-political gendarmerie, which was to take over from the National Guard in the autumn.

In September 1945 the governments of Britain, France and the United States issued a statement advising that, contrary to the Varkiza decisions, parliamentary elections should precede the plebiscite on the monarchy. The reason for this was the belief that the rapid growth of monarchism in the last months was only a temporary reaction against communism, and that time should be allowed for passions to cool, so that somewhat later the Greek people could decide, in a more peaceful atmosphere, whether they would prefer a monarchy or a republic. Meanwhile the sooner they had a democratically elected parliament the better. This intervention of the Western Powers thus definitely favoured the republicans, and was resented by the royalists.

In October Voulgaris resigned. After several weeks of party negotiations, a government was formed on 2 November by Kanellopoulos, but only lasted three weeks. On 20 November Mr. MacNeil, British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, called a meeting in Athens of former Premiers and leaders of parties that had taken part in governments, excluding only the communists. The meeting was to consider the formation of a broad coalition and the preparation of elections for March 1946. The plebiscite was to be held not later than March 1948. Agreement among the party leaders on the basis of this programme could not be achieved. The Regent resigned, but was prevailed on by Mr. MacNeill to remain, and to appoint a government under the liberal leader Sophoulis, which included some leaders of the non-communist resistance, Peltekis and Kartalis. Foreign Affairs was held by Sophianopoulos, who favoured reconciliation with the communists and closer relations with the Soviet Union.

The Sophoulis cabinet was one of the best Greece had ever had, if judged by the personalities, records and policy of its members. Unfortunately, it was not based on any elected support, and it did not control the country. Lawlessness by right and left continued, and the preparation of the electoral registers was marked by abuses. The government considered that democratic conditions could only be created by the appointment of more reliable democrats to commanding positions in army and civil service. Here, like their predecessors, they were opposed by their British advisers, who hoped to create a 'non-political' army and administration. In February 1946 the communists announced that they would abstain from voting, and asked for a postponement of the elections until free voting could be ensured. Sophoulis himself was in two minds about the elections, and admitted that

conditions were unsatisfactory. The British government's view, however, was that elections could no longer be postponed, and that the communist request was motivated not by concern for democracy but by a desire to avoid the revelation of their own unpopularity. The British government felt the more strongly because at the February session of the United Nations Security Council the Soviet government had accused Britain of threatening peace by the maintenance of troops in Greece. The sooner the elections could be got over, it was felt, the sooner British troops could be removed. An Allied Mission was sent to supervise the elections. British, American and French observers took part, but the Soviet government refused to send its observers. The elections were held on 31 March 1946. The Mission expressed the opinion that they had been freely conducted.

The elections were a great victory for the right. The chief monarchist party, the People's Party, or Populists, had 191 seats out of 317. The National Political Union, an alliance of the groups led by Kanellopoulos, Papandreou and Sophocles Venizelos, had 56 seats, and the liberals of Sophoulis 42. The results reflected the real swing of opinion to the right. The elections were free, in the sense that there was no violence and little direct intimidation of voters. They were, however, certainly not normal elections, as understood in the West, for they took place in an atmosphere of fear and hysteria. Only 60 per cent of those registered had gone to the poll. The communists claimed the rest as their supporters, obeying their instructions to abstain. The Allied Mission estimated that not more than 20 per cent, and probably only 15 per cent, of those registered had abstained for political reasons.

The next government was formed by the populist leader, Constantine Tsaldaris. There were new arrests and deportations of communists and sympathisers to the Aegean islands. A severe Security Law was passed, which made possible arrest without a warrant. The control of the Right over the army and civil service was made more complete. When parliament met, on 13 May, the Regent announced the government's decision no longer to postpone the plebiscite on the monarchy. The British government reluctantly consented to the change of plan in June. The plebiscite took place on 1 September. There was no official Allied observation. Individual members of the original observer mission for the elections, who were still in Greece, unofficially watched the voting in various areas and expressed the view that it had been held in

normal conditions and 'faithfully reflected the people's will'. The results were 69 per cent for restoration, 10.3 per cent for a republic, and 20.5 per cent against King George II but not for a republic.<sup>1</sup> The king returned on 27 September.

Royalist rejoicings were diminished by the revival of civil war. The communist leaders deliberately decided to start armed action again, and no doubt had the approval of Moscow. It was one result of the deterioration throughout 1946 of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Western Powers. But it is also true that the communist action would not have been so successful had not many discontented Greeks been willing to respond to their call. Right-wing terror, which had been active ever since the defeat of E.L.A.S. and had grown worse under Tsaldaris, had driven into the mountains many who were not fanatical communists and would have been glad to settle down if they could have earned a living in peace. From September 1946 onwards the main area of communist activity was Macedonia. The rebels used stores of arms which had been hidden in 1945.<sup>2</sup> But it soon became clear that they also received arms and supplies from Yugoslavia and Albania, and that they were granted training facilities in both countries, and also in Bulgaria. Rebels pursued by Greek government forces could escape across the frontier, rest, be re-equipped, and reappear in another area later. In addition to ideological solidarity, the three northern neighbour governments had nationalist motives for supporting the Greek rebels. Albania was threatened by Greek nationalism, and also had designs on Greek Epirus. Yugoslavia aimed at the annexation of Greek Macedonia. Bulgaria maintained her demand for an Aegean port.

The Greek government presented a memorandum to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, requesting an investigation into the situation on Greece's northern frontiers, on 4 December 1946. An inquiry commission, with representatives of eleven countries, was formed, and began its meetings in Athens at the end of January 1947. Liaison officers from Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria were attached to it, and it visited Sofia and Belgrade. In April 1947 its majority (the Polish and Soviet members

<sup>1</sup> Voters were supplied with blank sheets, by returning which they could vote against George II without voting for a republic. They could also write on the blank sheets any other solution which occurred to them.

<sup>2</sup> E.L.A.S. gave up the amount of arms required by the agreement, but still had a good deal left. This was partly because its supplies had been under-estimated by its opponents, and partly because old weapons, of which there were plenty in Macedonian villages ever since Turkish times, were surrendered while many modern arms were hidden.

dissenting) recommended to the Security Council the establishment of a sub-commission based on Salonica to observe the frontier. It was set up despite Soviet opposition. The Yugoslav, Albanian and Bulgarian governments refused to allow its members to enter their territory to investigate incidents. During the sessions of the Security Council in the summer of 1947 the Soviet veto was repeatedly used to block action. At last the plenary session of the General Assembly on October 21 adopted an American resolution that a permanent Balkans commission be set up with headquarters at Salonica. The commission reached Greece at the end of November 1947.

During 1947 there were two changes of government in Athens. In January Tsaldaris resigned. The new government, headed by the elderly populist Maximos, was based on a coalition of all parliamentary parties except the liberals. Tsaldaris was Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Venizelos Vice-Premier and Minister for Co-ordination of Defence. The Interior was given to Papandreou and the Navy to Kanellopoulos, while Public Security was held by Zervas. The following months saw no improvement in the fight against the rebels, while the economic situation grew worse. In March came President Truman's decision to give aid to Greece. The American advisers were eager to have a more representative government in Athens. The non-populist members of the cabinet also wished that it should be reorganised, in the belief that this would lead to a more efficient conduct of operations against the rebels. In August 1947 Maximos resigned. After protracted negotiations and strong American pressure, a new cabinet was formed under Sophoulis. It was a coalition of populists and liberals, the centre groups remaining outside. Tsaldaris remained Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the liberal Rendis became Minister of Public Order.

During the following year there was no important change in the situation. In the summer of 1948 the army undertook a major offensive against the rebel stronghold in the Grammos mountain massif. At great cost the rebels were dislodged, but they merely escaped across the frontier into Albania, and later reappeared in the Vitsi massif further east. Observers of the Balkans Commission reported the many cases of aid to the rebels from across the frontier—including for instance the placing of artillery a few feet inside the frontier, so that Greek guns could not shell it without some of their fire falling in Albanian territory. But reports without

action were of little value to Greece, and United Nations action was prevented by the Soviet veto.

In December 1947 the rebels announced through their radio station, located probably in Albania, that a 'Democratic Greek government' had been formed in the 'free mountains of Greece'. Its Premier and Minister of War was Markos Vafiades, who during the war had been the chief political commissar of E.L.A.S. in Macedonia. In government territory the Communist Party could still function to some extent up to the autumn of 1947. In practice, in the provinces communists were liable to arrest or assault by right-wing toughs, and communist-printed material to confiscation or destruction. In Athens, however, the communist newspapers, *Rizospastis* and *Eleftheri Ellada*, appeared until October 1947, when they were suspended for incitement to rebellion. In July there had been a wave of arrests, including the leading communist and former general-secretary of E.A.M., Partsalides, who however succeeded in escaping from the island of Ikaria in December. Another leading communist, and minister in the 1944 government, Zevgos, was less fortunate: he was shot dead in the street in Salonica in March 1947. Certainly the Communist Party since 1944 had not enjoyed the liberties customary in the democratic West. Considering its record and aims that is hardly surprising. The fact that any communist activity was permitted as late as a year after the party had resorted to armed rebellion against the legal government is proof of truly remarkable tolerance on the part of the Greek government and its advisers, the 'bloodthirsty American imperialists'.

The Sophoulis cabinet was reshuffled in November 1948. A more serious crisis came in January 1949. Its real cause was the widespread feeling that better leadership was needed. One suggestion was that greater power should be given to the army, and that it should be put under the command of General Papagos, the commander-in-chief of the victorious campaign in Albania in 1940-1. Behind Papagos was believed to stand a young politician called Markezinis, who led a splinter faction from the Populist ranks which he called the New Party. He was ambitious, believed to be efficient, and accused by his enemies of aspiring to dictatorship. In the January reshuffle he became a member of the cabinet. At the same time Alexander Diomedes, a liberal banker, was made Vice-Premier in charge of economic affairs. Papagos accepted the post of commander-in-chief and was given wider powers. A new War Council of senior ministers was formed which

seemed to be a sort of inner cabinet. Changes were made in the highest military commands. The new cabinet was attacked. A populist deputy accused Markezinis of complicity in a currency-smuggling scandal. Though he insisted that he was innocent, the cabinet resigned, and after some days of crisis was re-formed without him. This episode was interpreted by some as the defeat of an honest young patriot by the old gang of politicians, especially by Tsaldaris, who was known to be jealous of Markezinis. The opposite school of thought maintained that a dangerous fascist had been made harmless by the democratic forces. On 3 June the Court of Appeal completely exonerated Markezinis from the charges, but he did not re-enter the cabinet. On 24 June Sophoulis died, at the age of eighty-eight. After further long negotiations the premiership was given to Diomedes. The government continued to be a coalition.

The communists too had their internal difficulties. The Tito-Cominform breach had its effects on them. Markos declared for the Cominform. But in February 1949 it was announced that he had been relieved of his premiership and command, and succeeded by Ioannides. It seems that the offence of Markos was the 'nationalist deviation' for which others of his co-religionists were being punished in neighbouring countries. In particular it seems likely that he was opposed to the new outburst of agitation for a Macedonian state.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1949 the government forces at last attained real success. The decisive event seems to have been Tito's closure of the frontier in July.<sup>1</sup> It is possible also that the rebels were finding difficulty in recruiting real volunteers to their forces. The Greek government forces were also better equipped and better led than they had yet been. Their summer offensive captured the main rebel strongholds. The rebel leaders then announced that they had laid down arms, and the Albanian and Bulgarian governments declared that rebel refugees on their territory were being interned. This was a great relief for Greece, but it would be wrong to be over-optimistic. There are certainly some thousands of Greek rebels in 'popular democratic' territory, and the munitions works and arsenals of the 'popular democracies' could put a Greek army in the field again if the Kremlin should once more order it.

On 5 March 1950 parliamentary elections were held. They were a victory for the moderates and a defeat for the extreme right. The

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 355-9.

Populists, who had won 191 seats in 1946, now held only 61. To their right were the groups led by Mavromihalis (16 seats), Zervas (7) and Kanellopoulos (7). On the extreme left, the Democratic Front, led by the socialist Svolos, won 22 seats. The Communist Party was still outlawed. Slightly more than half the seats fell to the three centre groups of Sophocles Venizelos (53), Papandreou (35) and Plastiras (45). After an unsuccessful attempt at one-party government by Venizelos, a coalition cabinet of the three groups was formed, with Plastiras as Premier, on 15 April.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Greece's war losses were very heavy. The U.N.R.R.A. Mission estimated that one-third of the villages in the country were destroyed. The Corinth canal was blocked, the harbours of Peiraeus and Salonica wrecked. All the main bridges on the Athens-Salonica line were down, 80 per cent of rolling stock and 90 per cent of locomotives lost, large stretches of track wrecked and many stations and repair shops destroyed. Livestock losses amounted to one-half the draught animals, one-third of the cattle, and 80 per cent of the pigs. Two million olive trees, three million fruit trees, and 60,000 acres of vineyards—essential resources of the Greek economy—were destroyed.<sup>1</sup> German economic exploitation was to some extent reflected in the frozen credit—of course quite irrecoverable after victory—of many millions of Reichsmarks, due for goods already delivered by Greece and consumed by Germany.

When the Germans left Greece, the currency was wildly inflated. One of the first acts of the new government was to introduce a new currency. But the economic situation was too much for government finance. The government had to pay a swollen civil service, give subsidies to municipalities in dire need, and face the expensive tasks of restoring communications and reorganising the armed forces. While expenditure was far greater than in normal times, revenue dwindled to almost nothing. The new currency began to collapse. In November 1944 the U.S. dollar was worth 150 new drachmae, 500 in June 1945, and 5,000 in January 1946.

The first serious attempt at a plan of recovery was made by the distinguished Greek banker Varvaressos, who became Vice-Premier in the Voulgaris government in June 1945. He attempted to reduce prices and to cut down the expenses of the bureaucracy,

<sup>1</sup> U.N.R.R.A. operational analysis papers 14, 20 and 25.

refused to raise the pay of the armed forces, and imposed an Extraordinary Contribution on industrialists and merchants. For a brief period these measures were successful. In July revenue rose and the inflation was halted. But Varvaressos was exposed to pressure from two sides, from the business men and from the trade unions. Civil servants prevented a reduction in their pay. In mid-August military pay was increased by about 50 per cent. The trade unions, under communist influence, organised a series of strikes demanding an increase in wages of 100 per cent and the inclusion of E.A.M. in the government. The merchants organised a sort of blockade of Athens, preventing food from reaching the market. The legacy of hatred from the civil war and the refusal of the rich to make sacrifices were too strong for Varvaressos. He resigned on 2 September 1945.

In 1946 there was some improvement, for two main reasons. The first was the import of large quantities of gold sovereigns, which the Bank of Greece undertook to sell to the public at a fixed price. This measure, introduced in February 1946, restored confidence in the drachma for a time. The British government also made a loan of £10 million, cancelled the Greek government's debt to Britain of £46 million, and made a non-recoverable grant of £31·5 million of military equipment and war surplus stores.<sup>1</sup> The second reason for recovery was the help given by U.N.R.R.A. The total value of U.N.R.R.A. supplies to Greece was U.S. dollars 358 million. Proceeds from the sale of U.N.R.R.A. goods were the largest item of extraordinary revenue, and 40 per cent of total revenue, in the Greek budget for 1946-7. But the proceeds were very much smaller than was expected, for two reasons. One was the very high cost of distribution consisting partly of difficult transportation and partly of retail commissions averaging 20 per cent of the final price. The high commissions are due to very high interest rates, which are in turn a result of the small funds at the disposal of banks, owing to widespread hoarding. The other reason for the small amounts received from U.N.R.R.A. sales was the failure of the authorities effectively to distinguish between the indigent, genuinely needing relief, and those who merely clamoured loudly or had 'connections'.

U.N.R.R.A. gave valuable help in the rehabilitation of Greek industry. Output was about 30 per cent of pre-war in the second half of 1945, and had risen to 64 per cent by September 1946.

<sup>1</sup> Statement of Mr. Ernest Bevin in the House of Commons, 30 April 1947, in answer to a question by Major L. Wilkes, M.P.

Improvement was much more rapid in consumers' goods than in basic industries. For instance, output of rayon—one factory in Greece—in September 1946 was 128 per cent of 1939, while output of mining as a whole was 13 per cent of 1939. The main reason was that industrialists, having no confidence in the economy, preferred to keep their capital as liquid as possible. Indices of employment were nearer to the 1939 level than indices of output, showing that productivity of labour was considerably lower. Employment in general in September 1946 was 81 per cent of 1939, in mining 52 per cent, and in tobacco 95 per cent.

One result of the general lack of confidence was that industrialists and merchants bought gold with drachmae at the official prices, and then hoarded the gold. Thus resources which should have been used for buying raw materials and setting industry in motion lay idle. The extent of this hoarded wealth could not be exactly estimated, as many comparatively wealthy persons did not have banking accounts, or did not use them, while the system of accounting was so primitive that it was not difficult to deceive tax officials.

Thus the relative recovery of Greece in 1946 was not based on healthy foundations. The conclusion of U.N.R.R.A. opened a bleak prospect. The only consolation for the government was that it would now be able to levy import duties, but impoverishment and hoarding made it unlikely that imports would be large. The growth of rebellion at the end of the year brought new material damage and further reduced confidence. The Truman decision saved Greece from collapse.

During 1947 the main cause of economic trouble was of course the civil war, and this was still the case at the end of 1949. It was at first intended to devote 50 per cent of the American economic aid to military purposes, 48.5 per cent to civil needs, and 1.5 per cent to administrative expenses. This had to be revised to 57 per cent for military and 41 per cent for civil needs. A large part of the civil expenditure was required for the support of the refugees from guerrilla areas. There were 50,000 in the spring of 1947, 100,000 in June, 300,000 in September, and 400,000 in November. During 1948 the numbers continued to rise. In January 1949 there were 660,000. During 1947 the economic situation grew steadily worse. In January the note circulation was 500 milliard drachmae, in December it was 963 milliard. The price of gold during 1946 and up to June 1947 varied between 130,000 and 140,000 drachmae: in March 1948 it was 230,000. An index of

twenty key commodity prices in Athens rose between March 1947 and March 1948 by 47 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

The advice of the American Mission followed orthodox financial principles. Revenue should be increased by more efficient taxation, government expenditure should be reduced by dismissing superfluous bureaucrats, wages should remain where they were, and an effort should be made to reduce prices. In practice this policy hit the poor far more heavily than the rich.

Tax receipts did substantially rise, but through indirect taxation. In any primitive economy taxation is bound to be largely indirect. But the lack of effective direct taxes is bitterly resented when a minority flaunt their wealth and escape the tax collector. Income tax has never been effective in Greece. The machinery for collecting it does not exist. It is not uncommon for businesses to keep two separate sets of books. If necessary tax collectors can be bribed. Some forms of property are in fact heavily taxed. A moratorium on rents has had the effect of impoverishing house owners. Drivers of motor cars have to pay tolls on entering or leaving central Athens. Houses and cars are visible. Those who possess hoards of gold or goods escape. From 1947 onwards the tendency was in fact to hoard goods rather than gold. By withholding goods from the market the merchants could keep prices high.

As long as imports are managed by the big merchants this situation continues. The Americans set up a Foreign Trade Administration, on which they were represented, which had powers to plan the nature of imports and to grant or withhold licences to importers. But the government neither had nor exercised power to prevent the important merchants from exploiting the consumer. The liberal Minister of Economy Varvoutis in 1948 tried to break the merchants' power by importing rice through government channels to sell at cheap prices. A campaign of defamation was let loose against him in press and parliament, his cabinet colleagues did not support him, and he had to resign.

The inability of the government and its American advisers either to make the rich pay or to reduce prices naturally increased the workers' bitterness at the freezing of wages. Greek trade unions have had since 1944 a stormy and tragic history.<sup>2</sup> In 1944

<sup>1</sup> Second, third and fourth reports of the American mission to the United States Congress, covering the period 1 October 1947 to 30 June 1948. Published by United States Department of State.

<sup>2</sup> The following account is based partly on Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-40, 256, 269, partly on conversations during my own brief visit to Greece in 1948.

an agreement between socialists and communists, both represented in E.A.M., to share the leadership of the new unions was broken by the communists, who seized control. A rival to both appeared in the form of a right-wing trade union group led by Hadjidimitriou and Makris. After the defeat of E.L.A.S. the Plastiras government entrusted to the right-wing group the reconstruction of the Greek Confederation of Labour. For a time the communists, through the anti-fascist unions E.R.G.A.S. which they controlled, were supreme in the north of Greece, while the right-wing group held power in Athens. It is, however, probable that the majority of workers throughout Greece at this time really preferred communist leadership. The Minister of Labour in the Voulgaris cabinet, Zakkas, made several attempts to set up provisional directorates, representing all groups, until union elections could be held. In December 1945 Louis Saillant of the World Federation of Trade Unions visited Athens, and obtained the consent of the Sophoulis government to the holding of elections. They took place in March 1946. A new directorate was formed, with the socialist Paparhigas as general secretary.

In August, however, the Tsaldaris government dissolved the directorate, on the grounds that the elections were not valid because the Supreme Court had declared invalid the appointments of provisional directorates by Zakkas a year before. Tsaldaris set up a new body controlled by Makris. During 1947, as the development of the civil war inevitably increased repression of communists, patriotic motives could be added to personal ambition as a justification for action by Makris and his friends against trade unionists suspected of sympathy with communism. In December 1947 the Sophoulis government, without previously consulting the American mission, passed a law forbidding strikes and lock-outs and prescribing severe penalties—in certain cases death—for the organisation of either 'in time of civil strife'. In fact the law was not applied, and it was repealed in May 1948. It had served only to help communist propaganda against the 'monarcho-fascist regime' inside and outside Greece.

In the spring of 1948 a new trade union congress was held at Peiraeus, attended by 1,500 delegates. These seem to have been freely elected by those workers who voted, but large numbers of workers were able neither to vote nor to propose candidates. The congress itself was a pitiful function. Various right-wing union leaders attacked each other with the wildest demagoguery. If the speakers could be believed, every man in the congress hall was a

crook. Despite the exuberance of rhetoric, a national executive and secretariat were elected. These were certainly far from representative of the Greek workers, and in the face of the policy of freezing wages there was not much they could do except draw their salaries. Living conditions grew more rather than less difficult.

In April 1949 there was a strike of civil servants in Athens and southern Greece. It was definitely not in any way the work of communists. Its leaders fiercely denounced the rebels. Its cause was economic misery only. After two weeks a compromise was reached, by which advances on future salaries were granted and certain quantities of food and cloth were issued free. At the end of May there was a further strike of government employees. On 27 May Makris resigned his post on the ground that official wage policy was 'a provocation in view of the tragic situation of the working class'.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that the Greek workers are bitterly discontented. It is probable that some have been disillusioned with the communists, as a result of the national implications of the civil war and the atrocities committed by the rebels. But as long as living conditions remain as they are, and every worker can see that the rich are not making their contribution to the state, communist propaganda will certainly have a substantial following among them.

Greece's foreign trade position has been extremely bad ever since liberation. Before the war, her balance of payments depended considerably on three 'invisible exports'—shipping, tourist trade and remittances from Greek emigrants. Greek shipping suffered heavily in the war, but shipowners received insurance money and have acquired new ships. But many Greek ships to-day fly under foreign flags, and most of the wealth of the shipowners is outside Greece. Tourist trade was of course wrecked by the civil war. Of the three items, remittances have diminished the least, but they are still less than they were before the war. As for visible exports, Greece has suffered from the loss of her pre-war markets in Central Europe. Tobacco is her biggest exportable product, and her largest customer for tobacco was Germany. Now not only can she not trade with the Soviet-dominated countries for political reasons, but her tobacco is driven out of the West German market by American. Greece cannot replace tobacco by other crops, for there are no other crops suitable to so large an

<sup>1</sup> The 'tragic situation' may be illustrated by one figure. The price of olive oil at the beginning of 1948 was 6,000 drachmae per oke, in April 1949, 27,000.

area and yielding such a high value per acre. The difficulty of finding export markets for tobacco is the chief trouble of the Greek peasantry in guerrilla-free areas. Both the United States and Britain, if they wish to help Greece, must do something about this.

But even with civil war over, if the currency were stable, and foreign trade normal, Greece's economic difficulties would not be over. Before the war Greece was probably more over-populated than any East European country. All the factors described earlier,<sup>1</sup> which increased the pressure on the land in Eastern Europe, operated in Greece already in the twenties. Then suddenly she was forced to absorb more than a million refugees from Asia Minor, about one-fifth of her previous population. This was too much for the Greek economy. The social and political troubles of Greece in the thirties were all basically due to this fact. Thus to return to the level of production and standard of living of 1939—still a remote prospect—would not be enough.

Greece more than any East European country needs a programme of planned industrialisation. Its foundation can only be the mineral resources and water power of the country. Instead of exporting minerals, Greece must work them in her own industry and export the more valuable semi-finished products. Metallurgy based on electric power is one of Greece's hopes. Much could also be done with processing of fruit and other foodstuffs. Whether the creation of a Greek textile industry to cover home needs and to export to the Middle East, favoured in some circles in Athens, is a sound project remains to be seen. All Greek exports are at present hampered by very high prices, due to an artificial exchange rate. The devaluation following that of sterling still leaves Greek prices far above a competitive level.

Even if all these improvements were made, Greece would still be over-populated. Greeks have always been emigrants, perhaps in 2,000 years of history the most enterprising of all human wanderers. To wander will probably always be the fate of many, and a fate often cheerfully accepted. But economic planning is essential. And Greece has first-class economists and engineers, at least as capable as the planners in the sovietised countries, and more humane, better qualified therefore to benefit the Greek economy without treating Greek workers and peasants as cattle. But before they can begin their work two conditions must be fulfilled. The foreign danger must be warded off, and the tyranny of political racketeers and merchant profiteers must be ended.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 15-17.

## GREEK PROSPECTS

Greece had from 1946 to 1949 the pre-war type of Balkan regime with a civil war superimposed on it. Contrasts in wealth, an irresponsible ruling class, discontented workers and corrupt bureaucracy were all there before the war. So was the brutal police force, with its horror of 'Reds' and its cruel methods of dealing with them. So were the denunciations as communists of personal enemies and rivals in business or career. Fear of communism has much more justification now than then, and some of the political policemen have learned a good deal about what communists are and what they are not. The heads of the Greek police are men of intelligence, and some of the recruits trained by the British police mission of Sir Charles Wickham show promise. But there still remains a mass of ignorant, prejudiced and brutal officials, who will listen to malicious accusations and arrest people without making sure that there is a case against them. Suspects may be kept for days in squalid conditions, and are only released after signing humiliating statements. Having once been arrested they are marked men or women. There is much unnecessary and inexcusable victimisation and tyranny. Though the scale is smaller than in the sovietised countries, it is bad and widespread. The bitterness which it created supplied for three years a stream of recruits to the rebels.

Another evil feature of the Greek regime is defeatism. Aware that Greece can be saved only by outside help, only too many Greeks shrug their shoulders and disclaim responsibility. 'Let the Americans run the country. If anything goes wrong, it is their fault, not ours. Meanwhile let us get our wealth out to Switzerland or New York or Alexandria. The next war will destroy communism. If it destroys Greece, too bad. We shall be in Egypt or Argentina. When it is all over, we shall go back behind the American army, as in 1944 we went back behind the British army or emerged from the protection of the German army. Then there will be no one left to challenge us. The Greek masses will have learnt their place.' An unfair caricature? Perhaps, but based on reality. These people exist, and often combine defeatism with a frantic nationalism. They are prepared to let foreigners run their country for them, but far from being grateful they hate them. The Greek ruling class knows it depends on the Americans, but the attempts of the Americans to put some order into the Greek chaos provoke transports of xenophobia.

The troubles of Greece have been immensely worsened by civil war, but their roots lie in the past. It is a tragic paradox that the civil war was a reaction against those evils of the past, yet has made them worse. Not all the rebels, not all the communists, were simply 'conspirators against Greece'. In the territories they controlled, the rebels forced unwilling peasants into their army, kept them there by terror, and inflicted horrible punishments on any who tried to desert. But many of their recruits were not unwilling, and there were many in government-held territory who risked their lives to help the rebels, collecting money, organising recruits, spreading propaganda and sending information. In the rebel ranks many fought neither from fear nor from sordid ambition and yet were not veteran communists. These were workers bound by loyalty to their comrades, peasants who hoped to see their village run by themselves and not by bureaucrats appointed from distant Athens, and intellectuals who believed they were fighting for freedom and independence. There were many teachers and students among the rebels. It is easy to sneer at the 'half-baked intelligentsia', or to denounce the *trahison des clercs*. But if the intellectuals are uprooted and serve an alien faith, it is because the old society neither let them strike roots nor offered them a faith. It is a tragedy of most civil wars that the most disinterested people on both sides are nearer to each other than to the leaders of their own side. Neither the Moscow-trained party bosses nor the professional patriots of the old regime have much to offer Greece. But they are able to send the youth of Greece to kill each other.

There could and can of course be no compromise. The rebel army was firmly controlled by the party bosses, and served Soviet imperialism, whose victory would destroy Greece. The rebels had to be beaten by arms. Political methods alone could not appease the country. Amnesties were offered more than once, with small results.<sup>1</sup> The rebel rank and file feared vengeance, and experience shows that they had reason. Though the government may sincerely have wished to pardon all who surrendered, yet when they got back to their village or town the local people, who had suffered from the war, were less tolerant.

<sup>1</sup> A good deal of publicity has been given during 1949 to the re-education camp on the island of Makronisos, off the coast of Attica, to which captured communist rebels are sent, and from which considerable numbers re-appear to fight in the government forces against their former associates. The accounts by admirers and enemies of the Greek government, both apparently based on a wealth of detailed knowledge about conditions within this camp, differ so widely that I can express no opinion on the methods used or results obtained at Makronisos.

The hope that the end of the civil war and the electoral victory of the moderates would lead to better and freer government and to economic improvement was not on the whole fulfilled. The moderate groups of Venizeloz and Plastiras could not co-operate. The bad features of the Greek economy remained. In October 1950 the Head of the ECA Mission, Mr. Paul Porter, mentioned the failure of the government to introduce juster taxation, to avoid waste in administration, or to prevent the squandering on inessential objects of Greece's foreign exchange resources. The government duly promised to reform, and the xenophobes duly cursed the Americans for their efforts to help Greece. There was more talk of military dictatorship as a way out. On 30th May 1951 the Commander-in-Chief, Field-Marshal Papagos, resigned his command and entered the political field. He founded a new party, to be called the Greek Rally, and evidently conceived on lines similar to those of General De Gaulle's RPF in France. Parliament was again dissolved in the summer of 1951, and a new general election was held at the end of September. The largest single number of seats went to Papagos' Rally (112), while Plastiras had 74 and Venizelos 57. The 'United Democratic Party', which received the votes of the communists, won 10 seats. The once powerful Populists were reduced to two members.

National unity, political freedom and economic progress still seemed far away. Nevertheless the greatest dangers had been avoided. Greece's many friends could hope that the future would be brighter.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS

#### NATIONALISM

COMMUNIST doctrine on nationalism was formulated by the Russian Bolsheviks already before the First World War. It was in 1913 that Lenin, then living in Austrian Galicia, commissioned the young Georgian Djughashvili to write some articles on the subject, making use of Austrian sources, including the works of the Austrian social democrat Otto Bauer. These articles have become famous as *Marxism and the National Question* by Joseph Stalin. Though written by Stalin, they were inspired by Lenin. On them is based the nationality policy of the U.S.S.R., embodied in the 1936 Constitution, the model for the nationality policy of the East European 'popular democracies'.

Communism is equally opposed in principle to the nationalism of oppressing and oppressed nationalities. Soviet policy denounced, for instance, both Great Russian and Ukrainian nationalism. It is the duty of the proletariat of the dominant nationality, in any state of several nationalities, to denounce oppression of a minor nationality, to insist on equal rights for all nationalities. It is the duty of the proletariat of the oppressed nationality to denounce the 'petty-bourgeois' chauvinism of its nationalists, to insist on unity with the proletariat of other nationalities. In fact the duty of communists is always to oppose 'their own' nationalisms and imperialisms.

The policy adopted inside the U.S.S.R. is regional cultural autonomy. This means that official business shall be conducted in the local language, that the local language shall be used in schools, law courts, newspapers and other publications, and as far as possible local jobs shall be given to local people. Discrimination against individuals on grounds of their nationality is not to be tolerated, and 'colonisation' by persons of the dominant nationality, monopolising the best jobs in areas inhabited by another nationality, is to be prevented. But this practical devolution goes with the most rigid political centralisation. Yakuts or Osetins may have newspapers in their own language, but they will be a

faithful echo of *Pravda* or *Izvestia*. The chairman of a village soviet in Bashkiria may be a Bashkir, but his directives will reach him from above through the double hierarchy of state and party bureaucracy. The U.S.S.R. is not a federation. The governments of the sixteen constituent Soviet republics are in all matters subordinate to, not co-ordinate with, the government of the Union.

The East European country which has most closely followed the Soviet model is Yugoslavia. There are six 'popular republics'—Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia. Within the Serbian republic there are an 'autonomous region' (Voivodina) and an 'autonomous province' (Kosovo-Metohia), the first with a strong Hungarian minority, the second with an Albanian majority. The organs of government in these regions and republics are composed of local people, including representatives of minorities where the population is mixed. The second chamber of the central parliament of Yugoslavia, the Council of Peoples, is designed, like the Council of Nationalities in the Soviet Union,<sup>1</sup> to represent national variations. But as in the U.S.S.R., all policy directives come from above, passing from the central leadership of the Communist Party and the central government down through the republican governments and the regional and provincial authorities to the local committees. Lower authorities are subordinate to higher, not co-ordinate with them. Yugoslavia is no more a federation than is the Soviet Union.

In Czechoslovakia there is a regional government for Slovakia, consisting of a legislative Slovak National Council and an executive Board of Commissioners. The Board is appointed by the central Czechoslovak government in Prague in consultation with the Slovak National Council. In practice the will of the central government prevails. The Board's task is in fact to apply to Slovakia the policy directives of the central government in such a way as not to alienate Slovak national feeling. It is entirely subordinate. Czechoslovakia does not even claim to be a federation. It is a centralist state with a measure of devolution.

The remaining East European state which has a large national minority is Rumania. The Hungarians of Transylvania number perhaps one and a half million. In the south-east corner, the so-called Székely counties, they form a compact majority in town and village. Elsewhere in the province there are Hungarian

<sup>1</sup> See Constitution of the U.S.S.R., Articles 33-6.

villages scattered among Rumanian, and many villages of mixed population. In most of the Transylvanian cities Hungarians form either a majority or a substantial minority. Rumania is a centralised state, and there is no special Hungarian regional government, comparable to that in Slovakia. The idea of autonomy for Transylvania as a whole, which has at times received support from groups of both left and right among both Rumanians and Hungarians, was also rejected. Instead it has been decided to combine centralism with local representation of both nationalities and equal status for both languages in public business and education. Local government bodies (People's Councils) in Hungarian districts are composed of Hungarians, and in mixed districts include Hungarian representatives. The number of Hungarian schools corresponds reasonably well to the number of Hungarians. For the first time in the history of Transylvania its capital Cluj (Kolozsvár) has two universities, one Rumanian and one Hungarian. This liberal nationality policy was not carried through without strong opposition, not only from the Rumanian nationalist followers of Maniu but also from a part of the Rumanian Communist Party itself, led by the former Minister of Justice Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu. The removal of Pătrășcanu from his office and his disgrace within the party were certainly to some extent due to his 'incorrect' attitude on the national question.

The lesser minorities in Rumania (Bulgarians, Turks, Tatars, etc.) are in principle assured equal rights for their languages. The Serbian minority in Rumania appeared to be well treated until the Tito-Cominform quarrel. In the polemics which have followed the breach, Yugoslav official propaganda has claimed that these Serbs are being persecuted unless they consent to denounce Tito's policy.

Finally the Rumanian government's attitude to the German minority has been modified. At first it was decided to expel the Germans. Many were in fact deported to the Soviet Union for forced labour. A considerable number returned, giving widely varying accounts of the way in which they were treated. The number of Germans now living in Rumania is uncertain. Before the war there were about 700,000, divided almost equally between Transylvania (Saxons) and the Banat (Swabians). It seems likely that well over half are still in Rumania. The Rumanian government in 1948 changed its policy. Denunciation of the German minority as a whole was replaced by encouragement of the class struggle within its ranks. An 'anti-fascist German

committee' was set up. In the words of a Communist Party resolution, 'The struggle against their own bourgeoisie . . . will open a new perspective to the German working population of Rumania, working alongside the Rumanian people and other nationalities.'<sup>1</sup>

The effect of this new policy is difficult to estimate. There can be no doubt that the communists sincerely wish to eliminate the old nationalism. Whether the bureaucracy is yet carrying out the new policy, whether Rumanian policemen and tax collectors are yet cured of the habit of regarding Hungarians with suspicion, or Croatian intellectuals have ceased to think of Serbs as 'oriental barbarians', may still be doubted. There is no doubt of the trend. The state machine and official propaganda are being used to put an end to nationalist persecution. But of course other forms of persecution are not diminishing. Ideological dictation and political repression may breed nationalism. Even if Hungarian peasants are no longer to be persecuted for being Hungarians, they are liable to be persecuted for being kulaks, or for being Catholics, or for being 'reactionary'. Will the average man distinguish the motives for which he is maltreated, or prefer one form to another? When he is beaten by the police, the Croatian peasant is likely, as in the past, to blame 'the damned Serbs', or the Hungarian 'the accursed Rumanians'. Even after twenty years of Soviet rule and communist education, there was plenty of Ukrainian nationalism left when the Germans invaded. The nationalisms of Eastern Europe are stronger, and have deeper historical roots, even than that of the Ukraine, not to mention the minor nationalities of the U.S.S.R.

The new nationality policy was intended to remove friction not only within the states but also in the relations between states of the region. These relations were of course determined by the dominant Soviet Union. Soviet policy has in fact shown some variation. On the whole it has tended towards reconciliation and close co-operation of its communist-controlled vassals.<sup>2</sup> But it has

<sup>1</sup> Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers' Party, 12 December 1948.

<sup>2</sup> The following treaties have been signed in Eastern Europe since the war: Soviet-Czechoslovak (December 1943); Soviet-Polish (April 1945); Soviet-Yugoslav (April 1945); Soviet-Hungarian (February 1948); Soviet-Rumanian (February 1948); Polish-Czechoslovak (March 1947); Polish-Hungarian (June 1948); Polish-Yugoslav (March 1946); Polish Rumanian (January 1949); Polish Bulgarian (May 1948); Czechoslovak Hungarian (April 1949); Czechoslovak-Yugoslav (May 1946); Czechoslovak Rumanian (July 1948); Czechoslovak Bulgarian (April 1948); Hungarian-Yugoslav (December 1947); Hungarian Rumanian (January 1948); Hungarian-Bulgarian (July 1948); Yugoslav-Rumanian (December 1947); Yugoslav-

at times exploited national and territorial quarrels between them, as did the Great Powers in the past, including Imperial Russia. This is not inconsistent with communist doctrine. Stalin himself has stated that the communist attitude to any given nationalist movement or national problem must depend on its effect on the general cause of the proletariat, that is to say, the interests of the Soviet Union. The application of this principle can be seen in the disputes between Czechoslovakia and Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and Hungary and Rumania. Another example of communist opportunism with regard to nationalism is the attitude of the East European regimes to Zionism. The most striking example of all is to be found in the relations between Yugoslavia and her 'popular democratic' neighbours.

The Czechoslovak-Polish dispute concerned the Teschen area, seized by Poland in 1938 when she supported Hitler in the Munich crisis. On 19 June 1945 Polish troops occupied the whole area. The next day the Polish and Czechoslovak governments were summoned to send representatives to Moscow. The Soviet leaders used the opportunity to force the Czechoslovak government formally to cede Ruthenia to the U.S.S.R. In return for this, their claim to the portion of the Teschen area which they had held before Munich was upheld. Relations between Czechoslovakia and Poland continued for some time to be tense. When a Czechoslovak-Polish treaty of alliance was signed in March 1947, it was stated that territorial issues would be settled by agreement within two years. Minorities in each country were promised equal treatment. The Soviet government avoided committing itself to either side. It had a firmer grip on Poland than on Czechoslovakia, whose political system still contained lamentable 'elements of bourgeois democracy'. On the other hand the Poles were less reliable friends of Russia than the Czechs. Czechoslovak-Polish relations were made closer by the trade treaty of July 1947, which included plans for joint development of the industrial area through which their frontier runs. After political opposition in Poland had been finally crushed with the flight of Mikolajczyk in October 1947, and 'bourgeois democracy' in Czechoslovakia had been liquidated by Gottwald's police revolution, mutual friendship

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Bulgarian (July 1947); Yugoslav-Albanian (July 1946); Rumanian-Bulgarian (January 1948); Bulgarian-Albanian (December 1947). In September 1949 the 'popular democracies' denounced their treaties with Yugoslavia, justifying this action by the 'revelations' of the Rajk trial. All the treaties, as originally signed, were mutual assistance pacts, for the event of aggression by Germany or any power associated with her in aggression. In practice they were of course alliances against the Western Powers.

was strongly encouraged by Moscow. Two such reliable vassals could be trusted to be friends.

This is even more strikingly shown in the Czechoslovak-Hungarian dispute. Whereas the Rumanian and Yugoslav governments promised full rights to the Hungarian minority within their frontiers, the Czechoslovak government, and especially the Slovak parties, were utterly hostile. It became a dogma that Czechoslovakia's destruction in 1938 was due to her too generous treatment of minorities. The Hungarians had shown themselves basically disloyal. They must either go or cease to be Hungarians. They were divided into three categories. Firstly there must be an exchange of population. The Slovak minority in Hungary would be repatriated to Czechoslovakia and an equal number of Hungarians in Slovakia would be sent to Hungary. Secondly, Hungarian subjects of Czechoslovakia whose families were of Slovak origin<sup>1</sup> could be 'reslovakised', that is to say could regard themselves as Slovaks, henceforth speak the Slovak language, and abandon all sense of Hungarian nationality. Thirdly, those Hungarians not falling into either category would be expelled to Hungary. A convention was signed on exchange of populations in February 1946, and the peace treaty laid down (Article 5) that direct negotiations should be opened on the fate of the rest of the Hungarian minority. In fact the interpretation by the two governments of the exchange of population differed so widely as to make agreement impossible. The number of Slovaks in Hungary was most uncertain. In the twenties it had been about 150,000, but it had certainly decreased. Fantastic figures were current in Slovakia. The Slovak communists showed themselves wilder chauvinists than the Slovak nationalists, even than the fascists of Tiso. Husak, the communist chairman of the Board of Commissioners, claimed that there were 400,000 Slovaks in Hungary, and that 400,000 Hungarians could therefore be expelled.<sup>2</sup> The Hungarians pointed out that small and impoverished Hungary was quite unable to support hundreds of thousands of penniless refugees. Nationalist polemics raged, more hysterical on the Slovak side and more dignified on the Hungarian, but no agreement was in sight. Meanwhile Hungarian children in Slovakia had no schools to go to, and Hungarian peasants were robbed of most of their possessions.

<sup>1</sup> Many Hungarians both in the territory in question and in Hungary proper are of Slovak origin. An eminent example is the former Primate of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Cardinal Serédi.

<sup>2</sup> I personally heard these fantastic figures from the mouth of Husak, in April 1947.

The contrast in the behaviour of the Slovak and Rumanian communists is not hard to explain. Both Czechoslovakia and Hungary still had 'elements of bourgeois democracy'. In both the urban middle class was numerous and influential. In both there was considerable political freedom. Both had traditional and strong economic and cultural connections with the West. It was therefore undesirable that two states so contaminated by the bourgeois spirit should have friendly relations. Therefore Moscow's instructions were to intensify chauvinism. The events of spring 1947 in Hungary and February 1948 in Prague changed everything. Once both countries had become reliable communist-controlled 'popular democracies' they could be allowed to be friends. The tone rapidly changed. In the autumn of 1948 an agreement was reached on the status of the minority in Slovakia, and in April 1949 a Czechoslovak-Hungarian treaty of alliance was signed.

In 1945-6 Hungary had had hopes that she might keep at least a part of the territory acquired in 1940 from Rumania. After all, Rumania had been a vassal of Hitler, and in fact had made a much bigger contribution than Hungary to the German war effort in the East. The Allies had promised to Rumania, when she changed sides in 1944, 'all or the greater part' of Transylvania. But there were territories on the 1920 border which were not strictly part of Transylvania at all, and where Hungarians formed a majority, especially the region of Satu Mare (Szatmár Németi). In the spring of 1946 a delegation, including Premier Ferenc Nagy, Vice-Premier Rákosi and Vice-Premier Szakasits, visited Moscow, Washington and London to argue the Hungarian case. The Soviet leaders were vague, but they allowed the delegation to leave with the hope that it would receive support for at least a part of its demands. But when the peace conference met, the Soviet representative insisted on the exact restoration of the 1920 frontier. Only the American representative put in a word for the Hungarians. The Soviet view prevailed, and the 1920 frontier was restored. This enabled the Rumanian communists to claim that the U.S.S.R. had shown herself a friend of Rumania, and the Hungarian communists to claim that had Hungary been as far 'democratised' (i.e. communist-controlled) as Rumania, the verdict would have been more favourable to Hungary.

Communists have always claimed to be bitter enemies of anti-semitism. They rightly pointed out that it was not only in itself a reactionary doctrine, but was a useful instrument of any reaction-

ary social policy. Anti-semitism, the 'socialism of the imbecile', was used to divert attention from social problems and to direct the hatred of workers and peasants away from capitalists and land-owners of their own nationality against those of Jewish race. Among the Jews of Eastern Europe, communism made a considerable appeal. It might be thought that a community so closely associated with both small- and large-scale capitalism as the Jews might be opposed to social revolution. But in the thirties the East European Jews, even where they were free from the immediate fear of physical violence, were faced with legalised economic discrimination which promised ruin in the near future. To the young Jews aware of this prospect, communist revolution offered salvation. It is thus not surprising that many of the leaders of East European communism were Jews.

But though against anti-semitism, communism is also bitterly opposed to Zionism, the other hope of East European Jewry, whose appeal was larger than that of communism. Nevertheless in the first years after the war the East European communists encouraged Zionism in their countries, and helped emigration to Palestine. This is one more example of communist opportunism about nationalism. The Zionists were mortal enemies of Britain, and Britain was the arch-imperialist villain and target of Soviet political warfare. Since the British have left Palestine, the Israel state has been set up, and the communists in Israel have been proved to be weak, the policy has changed once more. Zionism, no longer a useful weapon against Britain, is once more attacked. There are still differences within Eastern Europe. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria permit emigration of Jews to Palestine. But Rumania and Hungary, whose Jewish communities are larger, are preventing it.<sup>1</sup> In both these countries, as also in Poland, the prominence of Jews among communist leaders has caused among the anti-communist masses, influenced by years of anti-semitic propaganda before and during the war, a new wave of anti-Jewish feeling. In order to diminish their unpopularity, the Communist Parties may be expected to limit the influence of Jews within their ranks. From limitation to official anti-semitism is not a large step,

<sup>1</sup> The resolution of the Politburo of the Rumanian Workers' Party of 12 December 1948 on the national question declared: 'Zionism of any colour is a political nationalist and reactionary movement of the Jewish bourgeoisie, which tries to isolate the Jewish working people from the other peoples and to hinder them in their struggle against capitalism in the ranks of the anti-imperialist camp.' The resolution called for a 'reconstruction' of the government-sponsored and communist-controlled 'Democratic Jewish Committee', so as to remove persons guilty of tenderness towards Zionism.

and it is one that has been taken before in Eastern Europe. The liability of Jews to suspicion of the heresy of 'cosmopolitanism', now so fiercely denounced in Moscow, has already been pointed out. Four years after the defeat of the mass-murderers of Jewry, the outlook of East European Jews is sombre. The only thing that can be certainly predicted is that, whatever policy the new regimes adopt towards the Jews, it will be determined by the state interests of the U.S.S.R.

#### BALKAN PROBLEMS

The most striking examples of communist opportunism in national questions are, however, to be found in the relations between the states of the Balkan peninsula. These relations have been complicated by the fact that the southern boundary between the Soviet and Western spheres in Europe cuts through the peninsula. The Tito-Cominform dispute increased the confusion.

The mountain barriers of the Balkans form a natural obstacle which separates Russia and north-eastern Europe from the Mediterranean. Existing communications provide only three important gaps in the barrier—the north-east corner of the Adriatic at Trieste and Fiume, the Vardar valley leading down to Salonica, and the Black Sea Straits passing Constantinople. It is no accident that Trieste, the Straits and Macedonia are the three danger-spots of south-east Europe. All three are controlled directly or indirectly by the West.

Trieste was once the principal port of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Its population was mainly Italian, while in the surrounding villages Slovenes predominated. Fiume, a smaller port separated from Trieste by the peninsula of Istria, was also Italian in population and was surrounded by Croatian villages. It was the port of Hungary, which possessed a short coastal strip between Austrian Istria and Austrian Dalmatia. Italy, which had desired Trieste ever since 1870, came into the First World War to obtain it, paid a heavy price of 600,000 dead, and received it in 1918. Istria and Fiume were the subject of years of controversy between Italy and Yugoslavia.<sup>1</sup> In the end Italy won, and a Slav population numbering between 350,000 (Italian figures) or 600,000 (Yugoslav estimate) came under Italian rule. After Italy's surrender in 1943, these Slovenes and Croats fought in large numbers and with great courage in Tito's forces. The Partisans' provisional

<sup>1</sup> For further details see Macartney and Cremona, *The Foreign and Colonial Policy of Italy*.

parliament A.V.N.O.J. at its Jajce session in November 1943 solemnly declared the disputed provinces<sup>1</sup> and Trieste itself annexed to Yugoslavia. In April 1945 the Yugoslav army after heavy fighting against the Germans forced its way into Trieste, where it met New Zealand troops advancing from the Po.

In the various wartime discussions between Tito and the political and military leaders of the Western Allies, the future of Trieste had never been decided. It seems that the Allied Command believed Allied troops would reach the city before Tito's raw guerrillas, and that ultimate solution could be safely postponed to the future peace conference. If so, they underestimated the Yugoslav army. In May 1945 an ugly situation existed. The Yugoslavs considered the Jajce 'annexation' internationally binding, and the Allied forces mere intruders. The Yugoslav Chief of Staff, a boorish Montenegrin, General Arso Jovanović, went out of his way to be offensive to the Allies. All ranks of the Allied forces, finding the Yugoslavs arrogant and unfriendly, inevitably felt more sympathy for the Italians, who used all their arts to ingratiate themselves. The Yugoslavs in turn accused the Allies of protecting Italian fascists. As the British and American governments stood firm, and the Soviet Union gave no open backing to Yugoslavia, Tito had to accept a provisional agreement, signed 9 June, on the boundaries between the two armies. The boundary, the 'Morgan line',<sup>2</sup> left the greater part of Venezia Giulia to Yugoslavia, but Trieste itself, the Istrian port of Pola, and an area of Slovene population stretching from Trieste up to Gorizia, were left in Allied occupation. Relations remained extremely bad. There were frontier incidents from time to time along the Morgan line, and in Trieste the communists, both Italian and Slovene, organised political strikes and demonstrations which sometimes led to bloodshed. The non-communist Italians were solidly opposed to Yugoslavia, and wished Trieste to be either incorporated in Italy or autonomous. The communists were torn between the desire to belong to a communist state and the desire to be in Italy. The Trieste question gave much trouble to the Communist Party inside Italy. All the ingenuity of Togliatti was needed to avoid a compromising position. It was not until the Tito-Cominform breach of June 1948 that the Italian communists were relieved of embarrassment. Then a split came between

<sup>1</sup> The Italian name for the whole area was Venezia Giulia. The Yugoslavs called it the Slovene seaboard (Primorje).

<sup>2</sup> Named after General Morgan, C.G.S., of the Allied Mediterranean forces.

Italian and Slovene communists in Trieste. But both communist groups remained hostile to the 'Western imperialists'. To maintain an impartial administration by democratic methods in the face of the constant insults, incidents and provocations of the communists was a thankless task for the Anglo-American authorities.

Trieste provided a subject for a long series of inter-Allied discussions. The Yugoslav case deserved serious consideration. The Yugoslavs admitted that the population of Trieste was mainly Italian. They pointed out, however, that it was the outlet of the whole Danube basin. Italian trade did not need Trieste, as Italy had many ports. Between the wars Trieste had declined in comparison with Austrian times. Yugoslavia, closely linked to the other Danubian countries now under Soviet domination, was a more reliable trustee of the interests of the Danube basin than Italy, whose economic interests lay elsewhere, and which was under the influence of the Western rivals of the Soviet Union. The Yugoslavs also based their case on the principle of reparations. Italy had done immense harm to Yugoslavia, but had then herself suffered so much from military operations and German exploitation that she was not in a position to pay reparations. The cession of Trieste and its surroundings, with valuable factories and ship-building yards, would give Yugoslavia considerable reparation without ruining the rest of Italy. But though the Soviet government supported Yugoslavia, the French and Anglo-Saxons were against. Unwillingness to place a valuable port in the hands of a Soviet satellite combined with resentment at the behaviour of the Yugoslavs on the spot.

The peace treaty with Italy, signed on 10 February 1947, laid down the frontier between Italy and Yugoslavia, and created a Free Territory of Trieste, whose statute was attached to the treaty. The greater part of Venezia Giulia went to Yugoslavia, but the shipbuilding centre Monfalcone and the railway through Gorizia, including the latter city, went to Italy. The Free Territory included a piece of coast between the two towns of Duino and Cittanuova. It was divided into an Anglo-American occupation zone and a Yugoslav occupation zone.

The U.N. Security Council took over formal responsibility for the Free Territory on 10 January 1947. During the year repeated attempts by the Security Council to elect a governor of the Free Territory failed, the candidates of the Western Powers being vetoed by the Soviet bloc and vice-versa. Meanwhile the Yugoslav authorities treated their zone as if it were incorporated in Yugo-

slavia. In Trieste itself the non-communist Italians showed clearly that they wished the city annexed directly to Italy. The Italian government wished the same, but rejected a proposal made by Tito to the Italian communist leader Togliatti, that Trieste be exchanged for Gorizia. In March 1948 the Western Powers proposed to the Soviet and the Italian governments that, as the Yugoslav zone of the territory was in effect a part of Yugoslavia, as all efforts to agree on a governor had failed, and as there was no real desire in Trieste for independence, the Free Territory should be handed over to Italy. The proposal was well timed to create pro-Western feeling in Italy on the eve of the election. It caused indignation in Yugoslavia, and was rejected by the Soviet government. Anglo-American forces therefore remain in Trieste on behalf of the U.N. Security Council. Elections were held in the Free Territory in June 1949. The parties favouring union with Italy won 65 per cent of the votes (Christian democrats 40 per cent); the Cominform communists, who in accordance with Soviet policy opposed union, polled 20 per cent; Tito supporters had less than 2 per cent.

One effect of the dispute has of course been that the trade of Trieste has suffered, and that there has been unemployment in the city. Up till 1948 it looked as if Yugoslavia would seek to divert the trade of the Danubian satellites to Fiume, which has been Yugoslav since 1945 and is reasonably well served by rail. Fiume in fact might expect to be made a rival to Trieste, by much new harbour construction, in the same way as Gdynia was made by post-1918 Poland into a rival to the older port of Danzig. But the stoppage of Yugoslavia's trade with the Danubian countries since the Tito-Cominform dispute has made this impracticable for the present. The rest of Yugoslavia's coast contains several harbours capable of development, especially Split, Dubrovnik and Kotor, but their hinterland is so mountainous and communications so bad that many years must pass before they can be of much use to Danubian-Mediterranean trade. The same objections apply to the Albanian ports of Durazzo and Valona, now the only secure Soviet outposts on the Adriatic.

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The Black Sea Straits have of course been for generations a cause of dispute between Russia and Turkey and between Russia and the European Powers. The Soviet government was discontented with the policy of Turkey during the Second World

War. It objected to the German-Turkish treaty of June 1941, which had facilitated Germany's invasion of Russia; to the agitation of the pro-German 'pan-Turk' group in Turkey who hoped that the U.S.S.R. would disintegrate and that regions in the Caucasus and Central Asia with Turkish population would become independent or be joined to Turkey; and to the alleged toleration by the Turks of the passage through the Straits of German warships. On 19 March 1945 the Soviet government denounced the 1925 treaty of friendship with Turkey. On 22 June the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, Vinogradov, stated that the U.S.S.R. was prepared for a new treaty with Turkey provided that the eastern frontier provinces of Kars, Artvin and Ardahan were given to the U.S.S.R.; a Soviet base were set up inside the Straits; and the Montreux convention of 1936 revised. These demands were clearly unacceptable to Turkey. On 11 July the Turkish Foreign Minister, Hassan Saka, then in London, stated that Turkey was prepared to consider a revision of the Montreux convention, but only provided that it were undertaken by the Powers that had signed in 1936.<sup>1</sup>

The Straits question was discussed at the Potsdam conference in August, when it was agreed that each of the Big Three should separately confer with the Turkish government in order to prepare for negotiations to replace the Montreux convention by an arrangement more suited to post-war needs in general and Soviet wishes in particular. An American note of 2 November 1945 proposed that at all times the Straits should be open to merchant vessels of all nations and to warships of Black Sea Powers, but that warships of non-Black Sea Powers should be admitted only by the consent of the Black Sea Powers or in pursuance of duties undertaken under United Nations authority. On 21 November the British government associated itself with the American note. Both Powers had thus declared themselves willing to participate in a revision of the Montreux convention.

Meanwhile violent press campaigns developed in both Turkey and the Soviet Union. On 4 December a mob of students and toughs broke up the premises of a Soviet bookshop and a Turkish newspaper of mildly pro-Soviet tendencies in Istanbul. As Soviet property was involved an exchange of official notes took place, the Soviet government pointing out that during these acts of

<sup>1</sup> With two important modifications. The United States was not a signatory of Montreux. Japan was. Turkey now wished the United States to sign the future treaty, but was not interested in Japanese participation.

violence the police had made no attempt to restore order. On 14 December two Soviet Georgian professors published an article, which received wide publicity in the U.S.S.R., demanding the annexation of some 170 miles of Turkey's Black Sea coastline on the ground that the area was historically or ethnically Georgian. Similar demands were made from Soviet Armenia, with some support from Armenian organisations in the Middle East.

In August 1946 the Soviet government officially proposed to the Turkish government that a new regime for the Straits be prepared by the Black Sea Powers only, and that Turkey and the U.S.S.R. 'as the Powers most interested in, and capable of ensuring, freedom of merchant shipping and security in the Straits, should jointly organise the defence of the Straits to prevent their use by other states for purposes hostile to the Black Sea Powers'.

With the example of the Baltic states in their minds, the Turks naturally disliked the idea of joint Soviet-Turkish bases on Turkish territory. The Turkish government rejected the Soviet proposal on 22 August. At the same time it repeated its willingness to take part in a conference for the revision of the Montreux convention, provided that this conference was attended by the 1936 signatories and by the United States. The American point of view had been made clear in a note delivered to the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Washington on 19 August. The American note maintained that the defence of the Straits was best entrusted to the Turkish government alone, and that should a threat to the Soviet positions in the Black Sea ever develop from non-Black Sea Powers wishing to make use of the Straits for this purpose, the matter could be best dealt with by the United Nations. The note once more repeated the American government's willingness to take part in a new international conference on the Straits.

Matters had thus reached a deadlock. The Soviet Union insisted on a bilateral arrangement which would in fact give the U.S.S.R. control of the Straits. Turkey insisted on her sovereign rights. The Western Powers insisted on an international solution. Turkey felt obliged to keep a large part of her population mobilised, and the economic strain became intolerable. It was to relieve this strain that in March 1947 President Truman decided to ask the United States Congress to approve an expenditure of 400,000,000 dollars on aid to Greece and Turkey. The greater part of this sum has gone to Greece, but Turkey has received valuable civilian and military equipment, and American instruc-

tors have been sent to advise the Turkish armed forces and industry. The 'Truman doctrine' removed immediate danger to Turkey, but the Soviet government has not abandoned its aims.

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The third outlet, Salonica, involves the most complicated problems of all. Salonica not only stands at the mouth of the Vardar river, the natural route from Central Europe to the Aegean, but is also the natural capital of Macedonia, the territory long disputed between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. Moreover, some fifty miles north of Salonica passes the long northern frontier of Greece, which is at present the southern sector of the land boundary between the Western and Soviet zones of Europe. This southern boundary is about as long as the more important western boundary between Lübeck and Trieste, much more exposed and less strongly defended.

Macedonia was Turkish until the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. As a result of those wars, and of the changes of frontiers during and after the First World War, it was divided between Serbia (later Yugoslavia), Greece and Bulgaria. The three divisions are often known as Vardar Macedonia—the Yugoslav portion, much the largest—Aegean Macedonia—the Greek portion, including the coast from Mount Olympus round to the mouth of the Mesta river—and Pirin Macedonia—the Bulgarian portion, called after the high mountain range between the Struma and Mesta rivers, and the smallest of the three portions.

The most numerous ethnical element in Vardar and Pirin Macedonia are the Macedonian Slavs. They speak various dialects, nearer to Bulgarian than to Serbian, but distinct from either. More than one and a half million of these Macedonian Slavs live in Yugoslavia, and perhaps some 200,000 more in Bulgaria. Bulgarian statistics do not distinguish between Pirin Macedonians and Bulgarians, and in fact the two merge imperceptibly into each other. In addition to the natives of Pirin Macedonia, there were in Bulgaria considerable numbers of Macedonian refugees from Yugoslav and Greek territory.

The number of Slavs in Aegean Macedonia is hard to determine. It is certainly much smaller than it was in 1912, for many Slavs left Greece and in their place were settled some 700,000 Greeks expelled by the Turks from Asia Minor. The Slavs, officially described in Greece as 'Slavophone Hellenes', are estimated at 70,000 by Greek statistics. This may be too low a

figure, but the numbers given by Macedonian Slav nationalists, mounting to several hundred thousands, are certainly grossly exaggerated.

Ever since the nineties there has been a movement among the Macedonian Slavs for an independent Macedonian state.<sup>1</sup> Originally this Macedonian movement aimed at equal status for all national groups within Macedonia, including Turks, Albanians, Greeks and Vlachs,<sup>2</sup> as well as Slavs. But soon it became a more or less exclusively Slav movement and then came under Bulgarian influence. This was partly because the Macedonian Slavs genuinely had more in common with the Bulgarians than with the Serbs, and partly because the victories of Serbs and Greeks in 1913, confirmed by the victory of the Western Allies in 1918, left Bulgarians and Macedonians equally opposed to the status quo. But it should be stressed that though Macedonian and Bulgarian nationalists were allies against Yugoslavia and Greece, their aims were different. The former maintained that Macedonians are a separate nation, with a separate language, and should have a state of their own, with its capital at Salonica and including the provinces held by all three Balkan states. The latter wished simply to extend the territory of Bulgaria to the west and south. During the twenties the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (I.M.R.O.), created in 1896 by the Macedonian nationalists, became an instrument of Bulgarian policy, and received support first from Italy and then from Germany. But inside Macedonia, particularly in the Yugoslav portion, the idea of Macedonian statehood, or at least very wide autonomy, was still popular. It was also supported by the bitterest ideological opponents of the now fascist I.M.R.O., the communists. The communists controlled a breakaway faction known as the United I.M.R.O. or O.I.M.R.O., led by Dimitar Vlahov, who became fairly prominent in the Comintern, and remained in Moscow until the later stages of the Second World War.<sup>3</sup>

Under Bulgarian occupation in 1941, the Macedonian communists were divided between those who wished simply to join

<sup>1</sup> For the earlier history of the Macedonian movement, see Swire, *Bulgarian Conspiracy*. For Macedonia between the world wars, and since 1945, see Elisabeth Barker, *Macedonia* (R.I.I.A., 1950).

<sup>2</sup> A group who speak a language close to Rumanian. They are scattered about Macedonia, but form a more compact community in the Pindus mountains of north central Greece.

<sup>3</sup> For a lucid account of the tortuous course of communist policy towards Macedonia between the wars, see Barker, *op. cit.*

the struggle of the Bulgarian Communist Party against the Bulgarian dictatorship, and those who wished to treat the Bulgarians as foreign invaders, and join with the Yugoslav communists in a struggle for a new communist federation, based primarily on the territory of the old Yugoslavia, but to be extended ultimately to include also Bulgaria. The leading Macedonian communist, Sharlo Shatarov,<sup>1</sup> favoured the Bulgarian orientation, but eventually the Comintern came down in favour of the Yugoslav. In 1944 Vardar Macedonia became the Macedonian People's Republic, one of the six constituent republics of Tito's Yugoslavia. The Macedonians were officially proclaimed a separate nation, and newspapers were published in a Macedonian language somewhat differing from literary Bulgarian. Vlahov became a Vice-Premier of Yugoslavia. In Skoplje, the republic's capital, demands began to be heard for the unification of Macedonia and the liberation of the people of both Pirin and Aegean Macedonia.

Pirin Macedonia was discussed by the Communist Parties and the governments of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Both sides stressed the importance of reconciliation between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. There is no doubt that the majority of Serbs and Bulgarians desired such reconciliation, and that the war effort of the Bulgarian army on the Allied side in the seven months following September 1944 had done much to further it. But both sides also agreed that reconciliation must not come at the expense of the Macedonians. They agreed that the ultimate aim must be a federation of all the South Slavs. When this federation was achieved, united Macedonia would be one of its constituent republics. Meanwhile, the Bulgarian government would grant the Pirin Macedonians cultural facilities equal to those enjoyed by the Macedonians within Yugoslavia. They would be allowed to consider themselves a separate nation. Macedonian teachers from Yugoslav Macedonia would be allowed to open schools and bookshops in Pirin Macedonia, and the Macedonian press published in Yugoslavia would be freely sold there.

The future of Aegean Macedonia was a difficult problem in the relations of the Yugoslav and Bulgarian communists with the Greek communists. The Greek Communist Party was particularly sensitive to attacks from the Greek right of treachery to Greek

<sup>1</sup> The party name 'Sharlo' appears to be a Cyrillic transliteration of 'Charlot', or Charlie Chaplin, a character deservedly and universally popular in left-wing Balkan circles in the thirties.

national interests. It could not possibly commit itself to the cession of Greek Macedonia to a South Slav federation. Its hopes of success in Greece depended on its being able to pose as the champion of all Greek national claims, including of course eastern Thrace and Cyprus, held by the reactionary Turks and the imperialist British. Even autonomy for Macedonia within Greece was irksome to it. On the other hand, Macedonia had been a stronghold of E.L.A.S. during the war, and became the main stronghold of the rebels of Markos Vafiades in 1947. The Greek communists did not wish to lose the support of the Macedonian Slavs in north-west Greece.

During the war the Slavs had on the whole supported the Axis. Though the Germans had not allowed Bulgarian troops to occupy this region, they had allowed Bulgarian nationalist propaganda, and bands of Macedonian Slav 'komitadjis' had served as irregular allies of the Axis and enemies of the Greek resistance. When, however, the Axis was beaten, and the choice remained between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers, between the Slav satellites of Moscow and the Athenian nationalist satellites of the Anglo-Americans, many preferred the first.

Yugoslav support to the Greek rebels tended to favour the Slav elements. This caused inevitable friction between Tito and Markos. Tito had to take into account nationalist feeling among his own Macedonians, which was giving some trouble to his police authorities. Several alleged conspiracies of followers of the old I.M.R.O. and its fascist leader Vanchø Mihailov were discovered. One of the Macedonian partisan leaders during the war, Antonov-Chento, was condemned in 1947. In view of the strong desire of Yugoslav Macedonians to 'liberate' Greek Macedonia, Tito could not show himself too accommodating to the Greeks.

For Moscow too the choice was difficult. Should the U.S.S.R. support the Macedonian Slavs, in order through a Slav bloc to obtain access to the Aegean? Or should she back the Greek communists, on the ground that it was worth waiting and making concessions for the sake of a greater prize—the communisation of the whole of Greece, which would bring Soviet influence to Crete, to the very gate of the Middle Eastern fortress of the Anglo-American imperialists?

The same choice confronted Moscow with regard to western Thrace. Access to the Aegean had been a constant demand of all Bulgarian governments since 1918, when the piece of coast left to Bulgaria after the Second Balkan War (1913) had been annexed

by Greece. In 1940-1 the Soviet government had offered to support Bulgarian claims in this direction, but in 1944, after Greece had been an ally and Bulgaria an enemy, and in view of the strong feelings of the Western Powers, Moscow had supported the demand for the evacuation of all Greek territory occupied by Bulgarian troops. At the Paris conference for the settlement of the satellite peace treaties, however, in the summer of 1946, the Bulgarian delegation had asked for an outlet in Thrace. After the conference had decided in favour of Greece, Dimitrov had stated that Bulgaria had not abandoned her 'just demand'. Such language from so eminent a Comintern personality showed that Soviet policy was still uncertain. As in the case of Macedonia, the choice was between waiting in the hope that Greece would become communist, or giving support to Bulgarian claims in order to extend Soviet influence to the Aegean coast.

The Tito-Cominform dispute transformed the Balkan situation. Once Tito was damned as a heretic, the whole of his regime had to be denounced, including the arrangements for the autonomy of the Macedonian People's Republic. From a constructive statesman and a pioneer of South Slav friendship, he turned overnight into a nationalistic megalomaniac. The Macedonian republican government was pan-Serbism in a new form. The Yugoslav heretical nationalists were simply trying, under cover of phrases about South Slav federation, to annex Pirin Macedonia to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav school teachers and booksellers established in Pirin Macedonia were only agents of the Tito clique of Belgrade imperialists. For their part the Yugoslav communists indignantly denied these charges, insisted that they had loyally carried out their obligations under the 1947 agreement, and in turn accused the Bulgarian government of nationalist persecution of the Pirin Macedonians. Relations rapidly deteriorated, until the atmosphere on both sides of the frontier was as hostile as in the days of Kings Boris and Alexander.

The new Cominform line, especially as expressed in Moscow and Sofia, now represented Tito as the enemy of a true South Slav federation and brotherhood and Dimitrov as its greatest champion.<sup>1</sup> As late as January 1948 Dimitrov had been reprimanded by *Pravda* for advocating a federation of all Eastern Europe. Now he was encouraged to advocate a federation of the South Slavs.

<sup>1</sup> The real views of Dimitrov in the last year of his life are wrapped in mystery. The Yugoslav communists claim that he was their friend, and hint at sinister circumstances behind his death in the Soviet Union. Cominformists represent him as an implacable opponent of the Belgrade clique of nationalist deviationists.

It was clear from the tone of this new propaganda that, whether the projected South Slav federation were to be formed by a union of the existing Yugoslav and Bulgarian states, or by making Bulgaria the seventh republic of Yugoslavia, the aim was a Bulgarian hegemony in the whole area stretching from the Alps to the Black Sea. If the first type of federation were adopted, Bulgaria would have a weight equal to that of all six Yugoslav republics. If the second type prevailed, then Bulgaria with 7,000,000 inhabitants would attract to herself the Macedonian republic with 2,000,000, and would play off the northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia against Serbia. In either case Bulgaria, being geographically nearest to Russia, and being led by the most eminent and reliable Comintern personality and admirer of Stalin, George Dimitrov, would have the strongest influence. In either case the Yugoslav state, the geographic complex created in 1918, destroyed in 1941 and recreated in 1945, would cease to exist. Russian policy, as in 1876 and 1919, had again veered from support of Serbia to support of Bulgaria.

When in the past Serbia or Yugoslavia had been threatened by Bulgaria, she had always turned for friendship to Greece. Such a change was psychologically difficult for Tito in 1948. The Athens government seemed to stand for all the things that Tito had fought all his life. It seemed to possess in exaggerated degree all the faults of the pre-1941 corrupt semi-dictatorships, based on a reactionary plutocracy backed by the Western imperialists and capitalists. Against this hated regime were fighting the Greek communist rebels whom Yugoslavia had supported with arms and supplies for two years. But official Yugoslav sympathy for the Greek rebels was reduced in February 1949, when Markos was removed from command, and the Macedonian Slavs of the Greek communist-held area were allowed to hold a congress, at which they demanded the unification of Macedonia within a South Slav federation, and made clear by their praise for Dimitrov and denunciation of Tito that the federation they wanted was the Bulgarian-sponsored type. During 1949 Tito reduced his help to the Greek rebels. In July he declared the Greek-Yugoslav frontier closed. He took care to represent this action as directed equally against Greek Cominformists and Greek 'monarcho-fascists', but in fact it was of advantage to the Greek government. Co-operation between Belgrade and Athens was still far off. Yet in the long term interest is a powerful rival to ideology. A victory for the Cominformist Greek communists would not be to Tito's advan-

tage. On the other hand Greece would obviously not adopt Tito's particular brand of communism. The choice in practice was between the continuance of the Greek civil war, draining the blood and wealth of Greece and making all political freedom and social progress impossible, and victory of the Greek government, which with economic help and political advice from the Western Powers might make possible a more democratic regime. No such regime would satisfy Tito's ideal, but it would not threaten him. The formation of the Plastiras government in Athens in April 1950 was on the whole well received in Belgrade.

Albania also represents a common danger to both Yugoslavia and Greece. Albania has no friend among her neighbours. Enver Hoxha's regime lost any sympathy remaining to it in Britain from its wartime achievements by the Corfu incident of October 1946. Of his direct neighbours, Hoxha denounced the Italian government, in accordance with usual Cominform doctrine, as a base creature of the Western imperialists; continued supplies to the Greek rebels; and poured insults and injuries on the 'Tito clique of Trotskyists'. Albania is extremely vulnerable. The mountaineers of the interior have never been loyal to the Hoxha regime, particularly those of the north. Albania depends for supplies on the Cominformist countries. Occasional Soviet and Rumanian ships come through the Straits and round Greece, and occasional Polish ships through Gibraltar, to unload equipment for Albania's new factories and coastal fortifications and arms for her troops and the Greek rebels.

Albania has become the Soviet Union's only Adriatic colony, an outpost for planning operations against Yugoslavia and Greece, and possibly also for espionage or subversion in southern Italy. The Soviet leaders are interested in the construction of a railway from Durazzo to the Yugoslav frontier. When this line is completed—which will not be for several years—Moscow will have a further urgent motive for detaching Macedonia from Yugoslavia—to link her Adriatic ports through Bulgaria with the Black Sea.

Unfortunately a common policy of Greece and Yugoslavia towards Albania is hardly conceivable. The present leaders of Greece regard all Albanians with indiscriminating nationalist hatred. Greek nationalists wish to annex Southern Albania—which they call Northern Epirus—regardless of the undoubted fact that the overwhelming majority of the population is Albanian not Greek. This being their aim, they are not interested in

supporting anti-communist Albanians. The Albanian refugees in Greece, who include such prominent persons as Muharrem Bairaktar, receive no help from Athens. In Yugoslavia the gallant resistance leader and friend of the Yugoslavs, Gani Kryeziu, is still in prison. The only kind of Albania that Tito wants is a Titoist communist country dependent on Yugoslavia. The accusations of Enver Hoxha's propaganda that the Yugoslavs wished to turn Albania into a colony had a certain basis of fact. Albania, though a small country, is a potential key to great problems. Here is a task for Western diplomacy. No effort should be spared to persuade Greece, and, should relations with Tito improve, Yugoslavia also, to adopt towards Albania a policy both realistic and generous.

#### THE GERMAN PROBLEM

Hatred and fear of Germany are powerful emotions through most of Eastern Europe to-day. The two great historical German states have left a long memory of aggression and domination in the lands on their eastern borders. The Prussians earned the hatred of the Poles, the Austrians of the Czechs, Hungarians and South Slavs. Past memories were intensified by the horrors of the Second World War. Only two countries escaped lightly from German hands, and these are also the two which historically have had little to suffer from Germans of any kind—Rumania and Bulgaria. If the empire of William II was a menace to Eastern Europe, that of Hitler was of course incomparably worse. It is understandable that the East European neighbours of the Germans do not wish to see any restoration of German power.

The Poles and Czechs have a special reason. They have each expelled millions of Germans, and filled with their people lands whose population has for centuries been German. About eight million Germans have been driven from East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia, and about three million from the Bohemian and Moravian borderlands. They are now refugees in rump Germany, most of them in the Western zones. Their presence is an economic burden to the local inhabitants. They are a reminder of the grievances of the German nation, and a centre of anti-Russian and anti-Slav feeling. This was no doubt foreseen by the Soviet leaders when they put forward their plans for Germany, and persuaded the American and British leaders to accept them. By giving the Western territories to Poland, they not only compensated the Poles for the loss of the territory annexed by the Soviet

Union in the East, but made reconciliation of Poles and Germans almost inconceivable, and so made Poland a prisoner of Russian foreign policy. The expulsion of the Sudetan Germans from Czechoslovakia was emotionally defensible by the harm that this minority had done to the old Czechoslovakia: it had also the merit from the Soviet point of view of placing Czechoslovakia in complete dependence on the U.S.S.R. for defence of her frontiers. This was shown in February 1948, when the hesitation of President Beneš, and of thousands of typical Czechs who hated the communists, can only be explained by their unwillingness to take action which could have embarrassed the only Power which could defend them against an ultimate resurgence of Germany. So profoundly did the Czechs fear the future threat to their independence from a Power which did not even exist, that they were prepared in the meantime to hand over this very independence to the puppets of another Power.

But for the Soviet leaders it could not be enough to use the bait of German territory and the bogey of German resurgence to tie the Poles and Czechs to them: they must have a German policy of their own. Ever since victory, the Soviet aim has been Soviet domination of Germany, which would mean Soviet domination of all Europe. The first essential step towards this aim was the thorough sovietisation of their own zone.

The Soviet zone had in 1946 a population of 17 millions, about one-quarter of Germany's total population, within her present frontiers, of 66 millions.<sup>1</sup>

The political sovietisation of the Soviet zone began when each of its five constituent regions, or *Länder*,<sup>2</sup> was authorised, by decree of the Soviet military authorities in July 1945, to have a regional government. Two months later a number of Central Administrations were set up in Berlin. These corresponded to the departments of governments, and were directed by Germans under Soviet military command. Gradually the Central Administrations acquired more authority, and formulated policy, subject to the

<sup>1</sup> The population of the other zones was as follows: British zone, 22.8 million; United States zone, 16.7 million; French zone, 5.9 million; Berlin 3.2 million. Large numbers of prisoners-of-war were still in Allied hands. During the next three years those in the West were repatriated, but only a small number came back from Russia. If the estimates by the Soviet High Command and by the German organisations concerned—which did not widely differ from each other—of the number of Germans captured by the Red Army were correct, then over 1,500,000 remain unaccounted for. Either they are dead or they are still somewhere in the Soviet Union.

<sup>2</sup> Saxony, Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Brandenburg. The name of Prussia, with its historical associations both good and bad, was declared abolished by a decision of the four Powers. Formerly Prussian territory lying west of the Oder-Neisse frontier with Poland was divided between the five *Länder*.

approval of the Soviet military authorities. They became in fact the channel through which the Soviet leaders transmitted their directives to the Länder government. They began to form an effective zonal government.

The growth of the power of the Central Administrations might have been expected to provoke resistance on the part of the Länder governments. This was, however, of little importance because both central and regional authorities were increasingly controlled by the German communists. In April 1946 the Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.) and the Communist Party (K.P.D.) were fused, and formed the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (S.E.D.). This was achieved by pressure and intimidation of the social democrat leaders, together with the familiar propaganda campaign in favour of workers' unity. The new party—like the 'united' parties formed two years later in the East European countries—was the Communist Party under a different name. Policy, programme and organisation were communist, and the key positions were held by former members of K.P.D. In September 1946, elections were held for municipal and parish councils throughout Germany, by agreement of the Four Powers. In the Soviet zone, the main parties competing were S.E.D., Christian Democrats and Liberal Democrats. In all five Länder the S.E.D. vote was the largest, ranging from 48 per cent in Saxony, to 69 per cent in Mecklenburg. In Berlin, however, under Four-Power control, the social democrats, who had refused fusion with the communists, won 48·7 per cent of all votes, and S.E.D. only 19·8 per cent. The most probable explanation of the contrast between the results is that in the zone there was pressure on the electors while in Berlin voting was free. The rivals of S.E.D. in the zone in fact complained that they had had great difficulty in presenting candidates in rural areas, where the administration favoured the S.E.D.

The social and economic policy pursued by the German authorities in the Soviet zone developed on the same lines as in the East European 'popular democracies'. In September 1945 land reform decrees were issued by the Länder governments. The reform was in fact prepared by the Central Administration for Agriculture and Forestry, headed by the communist Hoernle. By the summer of 1948, 3,147,000 hectares had been distributed to 514,730 persons.<sup>1</sup> A Farmers' Mutual Help was set up (VdgB).

<sup>1</sup> From statement by the communist leader Walter Ulbricht in *Der deutsche Zweijahresplan*, published by S.E.D. leadership, 1948.

It was controlled by S.E.D., and resembled similar organisations in Eastern Europe. S.E.D. firmly controlled the trade unions (F.D.G.B.), which became, as in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, the principal instrument of government direction of labour. Nationalisation of industry was carried out in the form of confiscation of 'fascist property'. This indirect method was preferred in order to minimise middle-class fears and to avoid any obligation to compensate former owners. By the summer of 1948 99 per cent of the output of mines, 54 per cent in metallurgy, 41 per cent in the metal industry, 35 per cent in chemicals and 32 per cent in textiles had been nationalised.<sup>1</sup> At the same time reparations gave the Soviet authorities a powerful hold on the zonal economy. Apart from the removal of plant which took place in the early period, and the deliveries from current production which remained a constant drain on resources, there were important enterprises working on German territory solely for the U.S.S.R. These were the so-called Soviet Companies (S.A.G.). Labour, both skilled and unskilled, was also recruited for employment in the U.S.S.R.

Centralisation of government in the Soviet zone, and growing sovietisation of political economic and cultural life, were affected by developments in the Western zones. The Soviet attitude in Four-Power discussions of Germany was in practice, stripped of its verbiage, that the Soviet zone should be run entirely as Moscow wished but that the Soviet Union should have a say in the affairs of the Western zones in general and of the Ruhr in particular. Soviet demands for reparations from western Germany were met by the complaint of the Western Powers that they were being obliged to support the western German population in order that it should work for the U.S.S.R., in fact that reparations to the U.S.S.R. were being paid not by the Germans but by the Western victors. The first conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers on Germany, held from 10 March to 24 April 1947 in Moscow, settled nothing. While the next conference, held from 25 November to 15 December 1947 in London, was sitting, an allegedly representative body called the German People's Congress was created in the Soviet zone, which unsuccessfully asked to be allowed to send a delegation to the conference.

After the failure of the second conference, the division of Germany, which had been a reality since 1945, became formally more definite. In February 1948 the Economic Council and

<sup>1</sup> *Der deutsche Zweijahresplan.*

Council of the Länder were set up in Frankfurt by the Western Powers. The Soviet reply was to hand over new powers to a 'German Economic Commission' for the Soviet zone, headed by the communist Rau, assisted by the communists Selbmann and Leuschner and one representative each of the Christian Democrat and Liberal Democrat parties. In March 1948 the People's Congress held a second meeting, and set up a People's Council (Volksrat) of 400 members, of whom 100 allegedly represented Western Germany.

The next stage was the London conference of the three Western occupying Powers with Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg, opened in February 1948 and continued in April and May, which resulted in the agreement to create a separate constitution for Western Germany and an international authority for the Ruhr. While the conference was sitting, the People's Congress organised a 'people's petition' (Volksbegehren) for German national unity. In June came the separate currency reforms in Western and Eastern Germany and the beginning of the Berlin blockade. During the second half of 1948 further measures of centralisation and sovietisation in the Soviet zone included the formulation of a Two-Year Plan for 1948-50, announced by the communist leader Ulbricht to the Central Committee of S.E.D. at the end of June; an investigation and purge of S.E.D. membership—on East European lines—announced early in August; and the creation of a new Central Administration for Public Enlightenment (Volks-erklärung) and Propaganda, announced at the end of July.

The People's Congress continued its propaganda for German unity, by which was of course meant the sovietisation of all Germany. When in April the Ruhr authority and the West German occupation statute were signed, and the Bonn constitution was well on its way, the People's Congress organised elections in the Soviet zone and the Soviet sector of Berlin. A single list of candidates was presented. It was dominated by S.E.D., and also included representatives of a newly formed party called the National Democratic Party, composed of former 'minor Nazis'. Voters could only give an affirmative or negative answer as to whether they were for 'German unity and a just peace'. An affirmative answer counted as a vote for the list. The official results were 66 per cent for the list, and 34 per cent against. The People's Congress of 1,525 members then met in the Soviet sector of Berlin, and approved a 'constitution' for the whole of Germany. This provided for a bicameral legislature, consisting of a

People's Chamber and a Council of Länder. It contained the guarantees of rights and liberties customary in 'popular democratic' constitutions.

The culminating stage was reached on 7 October 1949, when the People's Council, formed from the legislature, pronounced itself the government of the 'German Democratic Republic'. Wilhelm Pieck was President of the new republic, Otto Grotewohl was Premier, and Walter Ulbricht was first Vice-Premier. The communist economic experts Rau and Selbmann were among the ministers. The new government claimed authority over the whole of Germany, and sponsored the activities in Western Germany of a 'National Front', agitating for an united Germany, that is, the subjection of all Germany to the Soviet Union.

This brief survey should have shown that Soviet policy in Germany since 1945 has had two main features, the creation of a 'popular democratic' regime within the Soviet zone, and a campaign for German unity, designed to unite all Germany under a regime of the Soviet type, subservient to Moscow. First the portion of Germany occupied by Soviet troops must be sovietised, then a Soviet or 'popular democratic' regime must be extended to all Germany. Thus the domination of the U.S.S.R. over Germany, and so over all Europe, will be secured. In the first object the Soviet government has been successful, in the second it has so far failed.

The creation of a centralised state of 17 million Germans, and the intensification of communist propaganda for German unity, are clearly not compatible with a policy of anti-German national hatred in Eastern Europe. In deference to Moscow's new needs, the governments of Eastern Europe, and particularly those which were most violent in their anti-German policy—Poland and Czechoslovakia—have modified their attitude to the German problem.

A conference of the Foreign Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and all seven East European 'popular democracies' was held in Warsaw at the end of June 1948. The conference issued a statement which accused the Western Powers of reviving Germany's military potential to serve their imperialist aims, of tolerating German revisionism with regard to Germany's eastern frontier, and of exploiting the German people in the interest of their capitalist monopolies. The conference demanded that the Ruhr be controlled by the four Great Powers jointly, that the four Powers should establish a 'provisional democratic peace-loving govern-

ment for the whole of Germany' from representatives of 'democratic parties and organisations', and that a peace treaty be signed and occupation troops withdrawn within one year. Thus the East European governments were not only demanding respect for their own interests, which might be threatened should western Germany become a powerful revisionist state, but were also posing as the protectors of the German people. The demand for the evacuation of Germany by all occupation troops at first surprises. But behind it is the assumption that, if the field were left clear, the superior organisation of the police force in the Soviet zone would soon allow the communists to obtain control of all Germany, and so serve the cause of the U.S.S.R. and the East European regimes.

At the 'unification congress' of the Polish United Workers' Party in December 1948, the German communist Dahlem represented S.E.D. During the congress the Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz paid tribute to S.E.D., which had been 'transformed into a party of a new type'. The test of Germany's democratisation, Cyrankiewicz said, must be its attitude to Germany's eastern frontiers. 'The S.E.D. leadership recently put this question very clearly before its members. A campaign has been started to have this fact recognised, and to popularise among the masses the achievements and successes of the Polish people.' Dahlem declared: 'The stronger Poland grows, the more rapid will be the building of the new system in eastern Germany, and the sooner will the working class in western Germany be able to profit by the example of S.E.D.' Relations between Poland and the Soviet zone of Germany were also improved by the conclusion of a trade agreement in March 1949. The volume of trade between the two countries was to increase from U.S. dollars 65 million in 1948 to 152 million in 1949. Poland would become the principal trade partner of the zone.

The congress of S.E.D. at the end of January 1949 was attended on behalf of the Czechoslovak Communist Party by Fierlinger. On his return to Prague he gave an interview to the official news agency C.T.K., in which he said: 'It is high time that we Czechoslovaks gave practical consideration to the question of Germany, and that not from a narrow nationalist viewpoint.' The policy proclaimed at the June 1948 Warsaw conference would, Fierlinger believed, 'allow us to find the correct attitude towards the new Germany, and definitely liquidate the age-old enmity' between Czechs and Germans. The best guarantee of Czechoslovak security and of European peace would be 'the complete

victory of popular democracy in Germany'. Fierlinger paid tribute to the leaders of S.E.D., who were 'proudly professing the old and unadulterated internationalism'. At the ninth congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, in May 1949, Kopecky stated that events faced Czechoslovak communists with 'a test of true proletarian internationalism in our relations with the democratic and progressive elements of eastern Germany, whose spokesman is S.E.D.'

In October 1949 the 'Pieck republic' was promptly recognised by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria.

Thus the German problem is yet another example of Soviet and communist opportunism. The communists had been the most violent apostles of hatred against Germany when their task was to rally support to the Communist Party in its struggle for power, and 100 per cent nationalism was good demagoguery. Once the battle of home politics was won, however, and once the Soviet leaders, having made sure of their grip on Eastern Europe, were seeking triumphs farther afield, the party line had to change. The communists of Poland, Czechoslovakia and eastern Germany must all show true proletarian internationalism, that is, subordinate their nationalism to that of the only Power whose policy is internationalist by definition, the U.S.S.R.

It has sometimes been suggested in the West that the Soviet government, which need no longer care about East European opinion, but wishes to win supporters in Germany, may decide to give back to Germany the territories annexed by Poles and Czechs. This does not seem likely. Millions would be on the move again, and the industrial and agricultural plans of Poland and Czechoslovakia, whose fulfilment is of importance to the U.S.S.R., would be wrecked. It is also doubtful whether many of the German refugees in the West would wish to return under Soviet rule. German hatred of Russia is based not only on the loss of territory but also on the past and present sufferings of the Germans living under Soviet and S.E.D. rule, which are well known in the Western zones, and on the fate of the hundreds of thousands of prisoners-of-war who have disappeared in the depths of Russia. It will be difficult for the Soviet leaders to win the love of the German people.

This does not mean that Soviet and communist propaganda in Germany is not dangerous. The slogan of unity has great power. So has the slogan of Soviet invincibility. Soviet policy can make use of two types of German. The first is the utterly reliable

tool, the sovietised stooge who is German only in language, and will devotedly serve the Soviet state. Wilhelm Pieck and his friends who have survived the various purges that ravaged Russia during their period of exile, are such tools. Perhaps more dangerous are the second type, those Germans who believe that by accepting the Soviet regime and establishing it throughout Germany, they will make Germany in the course of time the greatest Soviet state, the senior partner in a Berlin-Moscow Axis. They believe that one German is worth many Russians, that German brains and skill will infiltrate, and first secretly then openly dominate, the great Soviet empire. Thus communist Europe will become a German Europe.

The Soviet leaders are of course aware of this mentality. Still more aware, and naturally apprehensive, are the Czech and Polish leaders. Most aware and most apprehensive of all are the Czech and Polish peoples, who dislike communism and dislike Germans, but above all dislike the combination of the two.

To prevent the sovietisation of all Germany is the first priority of all for British and French policy, and for the European policy of the United States. Soviet propaganda, with its appeal to German unity, its attacks on Anglo-Saxon business interests, and its exploitation of economic discontent in the Western zones, is dangerous. But it can be countered by no less powerful arguments. Western statesmen must show the German people that the choice is not between division and unity but between a democratic system, now installed in two-thirds of Germany and one day to be installed in the rest, and a Soviet dictatorship, now installed in one-third of Germany and aiming at the conquest of the rest. Western statesmen must show the French people that the choice is not between a weak Germany that will be a vacuum in the heart of Europe and a strong Germany that will be a menace to peace, but between a peaceful and industrious Germany integrated into Western Europe and an aggressive totalitarian militarist Germany as a spearhead of Soviet drive to world conquest.

A few words are needed in conclusion on the smaller of the German states, Austria. Unlike Germany, Austria has had since 1945 a government recognised by all four Powers. Though the country is divided into four occupation zones, and Vienna into four occupation sectors, the authority of the Austrian government is recognised throughout the country. The Soviet zone of Austria has not been sovietised like the Soviet zone of Germany. The

Soviet authorities sometimes interfere with the work of Austrian officials, and there have been various irregularities, including kidnapping. But there has been no attempt to set up a Soviet political system. The economic position of the U.S.S.R., however, is very strong. The Soviet claim to the Danube Shipping Company and to 60 per cent of the output of the Zistersdorf oilfields was recognised by the Western Powers at the Paris conference of May 1949. The Soviet Union was also to receive a sum of U.S. dollars 150 million from Austria, to be paid in freely convertible currency over a period of six years, in return for some 280 factories which had been administered by the Soviet authorities since 1945 on the ground that they were German property. The condition in which these factories were to be returned, and the definition of 60 per cent of oil output, were likely to cause further disputes in future.

Apart from her economic aims, the Soviet Union's main interest in Austria was for some time the fact that the presence of her occupation troops there entitled her to keep troops on the lines of communication in Hungary and Rumania, and so exercise indirect pressure on both those countries. Since the summer of 1948, however, the sovietisation of both countries had gone so far that Soviet troops were no longer needed to enforce it. Thus Austria is of minor importance to Soviet policy. She is rather a bargaining counter to obtain concessions from the Western Powers in other and more important regions than an object of policy in herself. This does not of course mean that the Soviet leaders have renounced the sovietisation of Austria, only that it is low on the list of priorities. Soviet propaganda will of course continue its subversive efforts. In particular it will seek to undermine the Austrian Socialist Party, to create within it a pro-communist faction. It will also make the best of the argument that Austria's trade markets lie rather in the Danube valley than in the West, and that she should therefore draw closer to the 'popular democracies' and rely less on the Anglo-Saxon imperialists.

The East European country most interested in the fate of Austria since 1945 has been Yugoslavia. In Austrian Carinthia there is a substantial Slovene minority, and in the province of Burgenland there are some thousands of Croats. Yugoslavia demanded that the territory inhabited by Slovenes be ceded to Yugoslavia. Her interpretation of the limits of this territory has of course been very liberal. These Slav populations after the First World War voted by plebiscite to remain in Austria. The Yugo-

slav government, however, argued that the experience of the dictatorships first of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg, and then of Hitler, has destroyed the confidence of these minorities in Austria, and has made them wish to join their brothers across the frontier. The issue has been complicated by ideological conflicts. Many Slovenes who might on national grounds wish to join Yugoslavia are deterred as Catholics by the knowledge that Yugoslavia has a communist dictatorship. But the real reason for the opposition of the Western Powers to the Yugoslav claim is probably their reaction against the campaign of hate and insults so long conducted by the Yugoslav government against the Western Powers, and by the long series of provocations, incidents, shootings and espionage committed by Yugoslav soldiers and agents along the border between Yugoslavia and the British zone of Austria. The many cases of arrests, abductions, maltreatment and long detention in Yugoslav gaols of British soldiers serving along the frontier have caused special rage. In view of this feeling, it would have been impossible for the British representatives in Vienna to support the Yugoslav case. The opposition of British and Americans of course only convinced the Yugoslav government of the sinister and reactionary aims of the Anglo-American capitalists, monopolists and imperialists. When, however, the great Soviet Union also abandoned them, they felt even greater bitterness.

A more detached view of the problem makes one sympathise to a considerable degree with the Yugoslavs, and regret that they have played their hand with such boorish incompetence. The British think of Austria in terms of pleasant Alpine holidays and evenings at the Vienna opera. They have found Austrians charming companions. They have not experienced occupation by Austrian troops. They do not know of the cruelties committed by Austrian troops in Serbia in the First World War. They forget that Hitler was an Austrian, and that many of his ablest administrators and also many of the most hideous monsters of Nazi cruelty were Austrians. Among the first may be mentioned Neubacher, Hitler's itinerant minister in the Balkans, among the second Kaltenbrunner, the chief under Himmler of the whole Reich security police machine, and Globotschnigg, one of the main organisers of mass murder in Poland. It would of course be unfair to treat these men as typical Austrians, and to ignore the noble cultural tradition left by imperial Austria, or the noble democratic tradition of Vienna's socialist working class. But it is just as unfair to forget the long tradition of Austrian aggression

and imperialism, to forget that Austria has always been the south-eastern branch of German expansion. The Yugoslavs, our allies in two world wars, have been the victims of that expansion. If we are unable to give them satisfaction in the Austrian peace treaty, at least we should refrain from moralising about their attitude to Austria.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### SINCE STALIN

IN the Popular Democracies, the real distribution of political power, and the real aims of social policy, as firmly established by the end of 1951, were not substantially modified in the following three and a half years. There were, however, some changes in the structure of government, in the priorities of economic policy, and in the top personnel. These were for the most part connected with events in the Soviet Union. In Yugoslavia there were important changes in social and economic policy, and serious disagreements on the role of the Communist Party in public life. In Greece the rise of a new political party to power aroused hopes of far-reaching reforms. In foreign policy, there were further developments in both the main sectors affecting Eastern Europe—the Balkan and the German. These subjects will be briefly discussed in turn.

#### THE POPULAR DEMOCRACIES

Poland and Rumania received new Constitutions in 1952.<sup>1</sup> The Polish document abolished the office of President of the Republic, and replaced it by the collective presidency of the State Council. This body was now to consist of a president, two vice-presidents, a secretary and eleven members. Its composition and functions were thus brought still closer to those of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and to the presidia of the national parliaments of the other Popular Democracies. In the Rumanian document the main innovation was the creation of an Hungarian Autonomous Region, with its centre at Márosvásárhely (Târgu Mureş) and comprising the Székely districts of south-east Transylvania, whose population is almost exclusively Hungarian. This formally reflects the acceptance of Soviet nationality policy towards the national minorities in Rumania, which had in fact been in force ever since 1945. Apart from this both Constitutions expressed, in more emphatic terms than hitherto, the subjection of their countries to the U.S.S.R. The Polish document's Preamble

<sup>1</sup> Voted by the Polish parliament on 22 July, by the Rumanian on 24 September.

tated: 'The historic victory of the U.S.S.R. over fascism liberated Polish soil, enabled the Polish working people to gain power, and made possible the rebirth of Poland within new just frontiers.' The Rumanian Preamble asserted that 'friendship and alliance with the great Soviet Union, its support and its disinterested and fraternal aid, assure the independence, sovereignty, development and progress of the Rumanian People's Republic'. Neither Constitution brought any change in the distribution of real power.

The most important casualties among communist leaders were in Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

Slansky, Clementis and twelve others were publicly tried at the end of November 1952 for treason, sabotage and espionage on behalf of the West. Eleven of the fourteen accused were Jews, and the whole affair had an unmistakably anti-Semitic flavour. Both the principal defendants and nine others were hanged. The presence of Clementis in this group was difficult to understand. His real offence was Slovak nationalism, not cosmopolitanism, and he was not a Jew. His two close associates, Husak and Novomesky, reappeared in public only in April 1954, when they were sentenced to prison, respectively for life and for ten years, on charges of Slovak separatism.

In Rumania the victims were Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca (Minister of Finance) and Teohari Georgescu (Minister of Interior). All three were removed from all important posts in the government or the party hierarchy. Luca was, however, treated much more severely than the others. It was alleged that he had surrounded himself with enemies of the people, deliberately protected kulaks, and sabotaged industrial development. He was arrested, and was eventually tried, condemned and executed in October 1954. Surprisingly, it was announced on 14 April 1954 that Pătrășcanu (who had been disgraced already in 1948 for nationalism) had been tried for treason and executed.

The separation of the supreme command in government and in the Communist Party, which took place in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, when these offices were divided between Malenkov and Hrushchov, was imitated in Eastern Europe in the following months. It first occurred in Czechoslovakia, for exceptional reasons. Gottwald went to Moscow to attend Stalin's funeral. On his return to Prague it was announced that he had caught pneumonia, and on 14 March 1953 that he was dead.

He was succeeded as President by Zápotocky, who was replaced as Premier by Široky. Gottwald's former office of Chairman of the Party was not filled, but the office of 1st secretary was given to Antonín Novotný. Under the present Constitution of Czechoslovakia the office of President probably confers more real power than that of Premier. This had certainly been so in Gottwald's lifetime, and there seemed no reason to believe that it had changed. It looked as if the two most powerful persons in the country were now Zápotocky and Novotný. On 4 July 1953 it was announced in Budapest that Rákosi had given up the Premiership to Imre Nagy. The change was accompanied by the announcement of far-reaching reforms in economic, social and administrative affairs, and for the next months Rákosi remained very much in the background, though he kept the office of 1st secretary of the Party.

The division of offices in the other Popular Democracies took place only in the following year. The pattern was not uniform, for in two countries the pre-eminent leader kept his party post and surrendered the premiership, while in the other two he preferred the premiership to the 1st secretaryship. At the Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party, held from 10 to 17 March 1954, Bierut gave up the premiership to Cyrankiewicz, who had held this post from 1947 to 1952. On 20 July 1954 it was announced that Enver Hoxha had given up the Albanian premiership to Mehmet Shehu. In Bulgaria, at the sixth Congress of the Party, held in February 1954, Chervenkov gave up the 1st secretaryship to Todor Zhikov, while remaining Premier. In Rumania it was announced on 20 April 1954 that Gheorghiu-Dej had given up the 1st secretaryship to Gheorghe Apostol, while remaining Premier. The title of General Secretary of the Party was abolished throughout the Popular Democracies.

The influence of events in the Soviet Union on the Popular Democracies can be seen only in very general terms. The strongly anti-semitic flavour of the Slansky trial, and the rather less pronounced anti-semitic element in the milder disgrace of Ana Pauker, indicate some connection with the anti-semitic campaign in the Soviet Union which culminated in the 'Doctors' Plot' affair of early 1953. Probably the best hypothesis is that the Soviet campaign was directed against Beria, and that it had at least strong support from Hrushchov as well as the authority of Stalin. It is likely that Beria's recovery after Stalin's death, and the disowning of the Doctors' Plot, saved Ana Pauker from Slansky's

fate. The fall of Beria four months later was not followed by a revival of anti-semitism in the Soviet Union: on the contrary, Ryumin, the M.V.D. official alleged to be responsible for faking the plot, was himself executed more than a year later. Though Pauker has survived, Gheorghiu-Dej felt himself strong enough, or was authorised by Moscow, to execute Luca and to polish off Pătrăscanu at the same time. In Prague the Slansky wing had already been destroyed, but Zápotocky decided to give formal sanction to the destruction of the right wing of Slovak nationalists. One consequence of the fall of Beria was the flight to the West of a Polish police official named Swiatło, who made a series of sensational revelations on the leading personalities in the Polish party, and on the powers and action of the police. His defection led to the release, respectively in Warsaw and Budapest, of the American brothers Herman and Noel Field. The public admission by the Polish and Hungarian governments that the Fields had been unjustly arrested, cast doubts, even for the most orthodox communist mind, on the trial of Rajk in 1949, in which Noel Field had been named.

The fall of Malenkov in February 1955 was followed by the disgrace of the Hungarian Premier, Imre Nagy, who of all the East European leaders had been most clearly associated with the policies of the defeated Soviet leader. On 20 February it was announced that he was seriously ill. On 18 April it was announced that Nagy had been removed from the Premiership and from membership of both the Politburo and the Central Committee of the Party. The Minister of Defence, Mihály Farkas, was also removed from his government and party posts.

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The 'New Course' introduced in Soviet policy was followed in the Popular Democracies. New programmes were announced in speeches by Imre Nagy on 1 July 1953, by Gheorghiu-Dej on 23 August, by Chervenkov on 9 September, by Široky on 14 September and by Bierut on 29 October. Chervenkov's innovations were in foreign policy and in church affairs, but he had few economic concessions to offer either to peasants or to workers. The other four, however, promised greatly increased assistance to agriculture and more consumers' goods.

Much the most radical programme was that promised by Nagy. He admitted that the revised Plan of 1951 was placing far too heavy a burden on the country's resources. The government now

intended 'to cut our coat according to our cloth', and to devote far more attention to light industry and consumers' goods. The government would give greater material aid to agriculture, not only to collective and state farms but also to individual peasant owners. No new collective farms would be formed, and individual peasants would be allowed to leave collectives. Where a majority of collective farm members desired it, a collective farm might dissolve itself. Nagy also promised reforms in education and better treatment of the intelligentsia. Internment camps and special police tribunals were to be abolished. During the summer there was a steady exodus from the collective farms, resisted by local party officials, in some cases only by fruitless exhortation, in others by force. After four months without a public appearance, Rákosi on 31 October addressed a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Party. From his speech it emerged that about 10 per cent of the collective farms had dissolved themselves, but also that the attempts of peasants to leave collectives were being obstructed. Though Rákosi's general tone showed much less enthusiasm for the New Course than Nagy had displayed, he insisted that the new concessions must be faithfully carried out by Party members. The New Course was continued during 1954, and visitors to Hungary from the West reported a much freer atmosphere, and a remarkable willingness of the average citizen openly to criticise the government. Political prisoners were undoubtedly released in large numbers, and even included such eminent persons as the socialist leader Miss Anna Kéthly. The fall of Nagy in the spring of 1955, however, seemed to herald a reversal of policy. The official statement that announced his disgrace, accused him of opposing the development of heavy industry and the formation of collective farms, and of using the government machine as an 'instrument of oppression against the Party'. It looked as if a new period of investment in heavy industry, collectivisation and Party orthodoxy was to begin, with Rákosi again in full control.

Czechoslovakia had suffered for some time from labour shortage and from insufficient output per worker. In 1952 the mining and metallurgical industry of the Ostrava Basin proved especially unsatisfactory. In the summer the government staged two show trials of technicians, trade union officials and managers from this region on charges of sabotage. But neither reprisals nor exhortations could overcome economic facts. High wages for exceptional output were an inadequate incentive, for the shortage of consumer

goods deprived money wages of much of their value. Far from working harder, the workers worked less and less. The government decided to apply the stick. On 30 May 1953 it introduced a 'currency reform', which deprived peasants and skilled workers of the savings in unspent cash which they had accumulated. The workers would now have to work harder for longer hours, and they would have to send their wives and adolescent children to work. This new injustice combined with the widespread feeling that since Stalin and Gottwald were dead the regime was weaker, to produce a popular explosion. At the beginning of June 1953 there was a great workers' demonstration in Plzen. The crowds occupied the Town Hall, displayed photographs of Presidents Masaryk and Beneš, and demanded the removal of the government. Individual soldiers in uniform joined them. The leading role of the workers, and the emphasis on political rather than economic slogans, recall the events which followed in Berlin and throughout the Soviet zone of Germany two weeks later, but it does not seem that there was any co-ordination between them. The Czech workers lacked any unified command, or any central and accessible source of information, such as the German workers later had in the R.I.A.S. radio station in West Berlin. The government brought up troops from Prague and quickly crushed the rising. Unconfirmed reports spoke of similar disorders in the Ostrava region. But these stormy events provided strong reasons, in addition to the general duty to follow the Soviet model, for the adoption of a New Course in Czechoslovakia. In Poland conditions were basically similar, while in Rumania the plight of agriculture was probably even worse than in Hungary. Thus in all four countries the New Course had both internal and external causes.

The actual results achieved, in agriculture and in output of consumers' goods, by two years of the New Course, are hard to judge. In general the tendency seems to have been to reduce the total plan targets rather than to change the distribution of resources within the plans. Both heavy and light industry were to develop somewhat more slowly, but the proportions between them were not greatly modified. In Poland there was no reduction in the main branches of heavy industrial production, but in one of them, crude steel, there was an increase (from 4 million tons in the 1950 revision to 4.6 million in the 1954 revision). As for consumer goods, the new targets for cotton fabrics and silk fabrics were to be lower than under the original plan, while those for woollen fabrics and leather shoes were to be higher. In Czechoslovakia

there was to be no reduction in the basic heavy industries. In Hungary targets for brown coal, electricity, pig iron and crude steel were reduced, while in consumer goods cotton fabrics were to be reduced but leather shoes increased. In Rumania there was an increase in the targets for oil, and a reduction for crude steel, cotton fabrics, woollen fabrics and leather shoes.<sup>1</sup>

It seems likely that one limiting factor on availability of consumers' goods to the public in Eastern Europe is the demand for exports to the Soviet Union. Among the goods imported from Rumania listed in a *Pravda* article of 4 February 1954 were mentioned leather shoes. The Bulgarian press in the autumn of 1954 complained of shortages of fruit and vegetables, but an earlier press source had stated that Bulgarian pulp exports to the Soviet Union had increased since 1949 by 33 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

During 1954 there were announcements in Eastern Europe that as from 1956 the economic plans of these countries would be systematically co-ordinated with that of the Soviet Union. The Polish six-year plan and the East German and Rumanian first five-year plans all ended in 1955. The Czechoslovak first five-year plan ended in 1953, and the Hungarian in 1954. These latter countries did not thereupon embark on second five-year plans, but adopted respectively two and one single-year plans to bring them to the end of 1955, after which it is intended that all five should enter a new period of planning closely co-ordinated with the Soviet economy. Curiously enough, Bulgaria, which began its second five-year plan already in 1953, and in mid-1955 was still intending to carry it on until 1958, does not fit this pattern. Why Bulgaria should differ so much from the other Popular Democracies—with a far more rapid collectivisation of agriculture, and with no 'new course' in 1953—remains unexplained.

The situation of the main social classes in Eastern Europe has not substantially changed since 1952.

The percentages of the arable land held respectively by

<sup>1</sup> The original targets and the 1953-4 targets were respectively—*Poland*: cotton fabrics, 608 million metres and 558 million; silk fabrics, 104 million and 82 million; woollen fabrics, 75 million and 77.5 million; leather shoes, 22 million pairs and 25 million. *Hungary*: brown coal, 26 million tons and 21 million; electricity, 6 milliard kWh. and 5.1 milliard; pig iron, 1.3 million tons and 0.9 million; crude steel, 2.2 million tons and 1.7 million; cotton fabrics, 240 million metres and 220 million; leather shoes, 9 million pairs and 12.3 million. *Rumania*: crude oil, 10 million tons and 11 million; crude steel, 1.2 million tons and 1 million; cotton fabrics, 266.5 and 250 million metres; woollen fabrics, 39.4 and 32.5; leather shoes, 20.7 million pairs and 10 million pairs.

<sup>2</sup> *Otechestven Glas*, Plovdiv, 18 March 1954.

collective farms, state farms and private peasant households, in 1953-4, were as follows:<sup>1</sup>

			<i>Collectives</i>	<i>State farms</i>	<i>Private holdings</i>
Bulgaria	...	...	60.5	2.2	37.3
Czechoslovakia	...	...	33	10	57
Hungary	...	...	18	12.5	69.5
Poland ...	...	...	7.4	12.8	79.8
Rumania	...	...	12	8	80

Thus in Bulgaria collectivisation is largely accomplished, but elsewhere private holdings prevail. Communist plans of collectivisation were, however, only postponed, not abandoned. Shortly after the return of Rákosi from conferring with Bulganin and Hrushchov in Bucarest (after the latter had been to Belgrade), the Central Committee of the Hungarian party issued a resolution urging a rapid further development of collectivisation. It thus seems quite possible that within two or three years Hungary will have gone as far as Bulgaria. All that can be safely predicted is that the decisive factor will be the wishes of the Soviet leaders. As long as Hrushchov is powerful, agriculture will receive a great deal of attention both in Moscow and at the periphery of the Soviet Empire. The special interest of Hrushchov in maize is important, for Hungary, Rumania and northern Bulgaria have better conditions for maize production than any part of the Soviet Union except the Ukraine.

The situation of the East European working class remains unchanged. In comparison with the immediate aftermath of the war, living conditions have improved. So of course they have throughout the 'capitalist world'. As industrial output and the general level of skill rise, so will prosperity. Much will, however, depend on the actual achievements in consumers' goods production. Here the outlook has darkened since the fall of Nagy. Nevertheless the demand for consumers' goods as an incentive not only to workers but also to peasants is bound to grow, and the communist leaders will have to reckon with it. When the conditions of the workers do improve, however, this is only by favour of the all-powerful boss-state, not as a result of the workers' efforts. Trade unions exist to get more output out of the worker for the same pay. They defend the boss against the worker, not

<sup>1</sup> These figures come from speeches at the Polish Party Congress of March 1954, the Hungarian of May 1954, and statements by Novotny on 11 June 1954, by Chervenkov on 9 September 1953 and by Gheorghiu-Dej on 23 August 1954.

the worker against the boss. This it can be assumed that the workers, at least in the more advanced of the Popular Democracies, understand. The Plzen workers, like the East German workers, showed in June 1953 that they understood that political rights were the key to economic improvement. The Polish workers, with sixty years' experience of a heroic socialist party behind them, can hardly be unaware of the same facts.

It is now possible to see somewhat more clearly the nature of the ruling class in the Popular Democracies. It is closely modelled on what in the Soviet Union is called the 'toiling intelligentsia'. In the Soviet Union this term includes managers, bureaucrats, army officers, party and trade union officials, engineers, teachers, scientists and a whole host of minor technicians and clerks. Judged by its material rewards, power, functions, tastes and general ethos, it is a bourgeoisie, closely resembling the industrial bourgeoisie created by the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century in Britain, the United States or Germany. It does not own the factories, and it works not for profit but for a state salary. The driving force behind the industrial revolution in Western Europe and North America was private enterprise, the driving force behind the industrial revolution in Stalin's Russia was state action.<sup>1</sup> The dominant social group that emerged from this process in Western Europe and North America was a private bourgeoisie, the corresponding group in Soviet Russia is a state bourgeoisie.<sup>2</sup>

This new social group arose in the Soviet Union during the 1930's and 1940's. The process was even in some degree facilitated by the Yezhov purge of 1937-8, which decimated the surviving pre-1917 educated class. The new Soviet ruling group arose without being planned by anyone, and it consists for the most part of children of former workers, peasants or petty officials. But in Eastern Europe events were different. Lenin's and Stalin's revolutions were both imposed, in prefabricated form. There was in practice much more of Stalin's than of Lenin's. Eastern Europe hardly experienced the iconoclastic, utopian and equalitarian phase of revolution, through which Russia went from 1917 until at least the mid-1920's. The authority of the bureaucrat and the

<sup>1</sup> This is also true to a smaller but considerable degree of both Imperial Russia and Imperial Japan, from the 1860's onwards.

<sup>2</sup> There is an interesting discussion of this theme in H. Achminow, *Die Macht im Hintergrund*, Ulm, 1950. I have developed it in four articles in the *Manchester Guardian*, 16, 17, 18 and 21 January 1954, and in *The Listener*, 2 June 1955, and in a short booklet, *The Revolution of our Time*, Bellman Books, London, 1955. The subject, however, deserves much more thorough study.

manager were not effectively and definitely asserted in Russia until the 1930's: in Eastern Europe they were hardly shaken. It is true that the leading bureaucrats and managers of the pre-war regime were mostly removed from their posts, but those who took their place were not less authoritarian. It is true that for a time great efforts were made to train, from children of workers and peasants only, a new 'people's intelligentsia', and that the children of the former professional and business classes suffered discrimination in schools, universities and administrative posts. But this phase did not last long, and by 1953 it had been fairly generally abandoned. Children of the former ruling class were allowed to compete freely, on a basis of merit, with children of workers and peasants, and more than held their own. Thus, not only is Eastern Europe to-day ruled by a state bourgeoisie, but this is largely composed of persons whose parents belonged to the pre-revolutionary private bourgeoisie. There were even among the leading state bourgeois of 1955 persons who were successful private bourgeois—not only university professors or engineers but also industrialists and bankers—before 1944.

One of the most obvious features of the mentality of rising industrial bourgeoisies is nationalism. This was true of the private bourgeoisie of William II's Germany, and it is true of Stalin's and Bulganin's Russia. The Soviet state bourgeois are justifiably proud of their factories, of the great industrial machine which they have built, and of the industrial progress of their country. Of this abundant evidence can be found both in public utterances of Soviet speakers and in the pages of Soviet journals and novels. It is inconceivable that the same should not be true of the state bourgeois of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. But whereas the Soviet state bourgeois sees his country as one of two Giant Powers in the world, the Polish or Czech or Hungarian state bourgeois knows that his country's industry, its economic and military power are at the disposal of a foreign conqueror.

Thus to the traditional defensive nationalism of the East European peasants, rooted in the memories of past greatness, must be added the militant economic nationalism of the state bourgeois, rooted in the achievements of the present. The first form of nationalism is unlikely to diminish, and the second is increased by every new steel mill or engineering works that goes into production.

There also remains religious faith. As everywhere, it is stronger in the villages than in the towns, but this does not mean that it is

not in the towns. Two events in religious policy in the last years deserve mention. In September 1953 the Polish government arrested the Head of the Catholic Church of Poland, Cardinal Wyszynski, and increased its pressure on the church throughout the country. In May 1953 the Bulgarian government took a step in the opposite direction. It permitted the proclamation as Patriarch of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church of Kiril, Metropolitan of Plovdiv. This was the final stage in the formal separation of the Bulgarian church from the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and thus to some extent an 'anti-western' move. But it also enhanced the authority of the church in the country. Metropolitan Kiril is a devout prelate, and no communist stooge.

The fundamental hostility of all communist parties to all religion remains a fact, unaffected by temporary concessions. The religious faith of millions of East Europeans also remains a fact.

#### YUGOSLAVIA

During 1952 there was much public discussion of structural reforms designed to give effect to the policy of decentralisation and more direct participation of the people in government, which had been declared to be the aims of the Yugoslav leaders ever since the breach with the Cominform. These reforms took shape in the new Constitution, which was finally voted by the federal parliament on 13 January 1953. All Ministries were abolished. The supreme organ of government was to be a Federal Executive Council, of 43 members, which included the best-known leaders of the former central and republican governments. The chairman of the Council was to be the President of Yugoslavia, and this post was assumed by Marshal Tito himself. The Council was divided into Commissions for foreign affairs, defence, internal affairs, economy and the budget. Subordinate to the Commissions were to be five State Secretariats. The Commissions were to decide the broad lines of policy, and the State Secretaries and their departments were to carry them out. The declared aim of this reorganisation was to separate policy planning from routine administration, to liberate the supreme political leaders from the pressures of bureaucracy.

The federal legislature was also reorganised. The first chamber, the Federal Council, remained as before, elected by the population as a whole in territorial constituencies. The second chamber, the Council of Nationalities, was abolished. The representation of the national groups as such was, however, to be ensured by a pro-

vision that when a matter affecting the relations between the constituent republics and the central government was under discussion, a special group of deputies of the Federal Council should be formed—12 from each republic, seven from Vojvodina and four from Kosovo-Metohija—and should vote separately from the two chambers. The new second chamber was to be a Council of Producers, to be elected by workers in their enterprises and by agricultural associations. Under the new electoral law, 135 out of the 202 seats in the second chamber were reserved for industry, commerce and handicrafts, and only 67 for agriculture. It was estimated that this would give one seat to every 30,000 urban and every 150,000 rural voters. The electoral law permitted the candidature of any individual who might secure not less than 200 sponsoring signatures. No political organisations other than the Communist Party and its affiliated groups existed, but non-party individuals might present themselves. In fact, however, at the federal election, held in November 1953, only official candidates were returned.<sup>1</sup>

A similar reorganisation of executive and legislature took place in all the republics, and already in April 1952 the People's Committees had been reorganised on a bicameral basis, with an assembly of citizens and a council of producers.

Two reforms of potential importance were the transformation of the security police (U.D.B.) from a military into a civilian organisation in June 1952, and the abolition of political commissars in the armed forces in June 1953. In announcing the first of these reforms, Alexander Ranković claimed that U.D.B., in contrast to the M.V.D. in the Soviet Union, had not made itself into a power above society, and that it had 'avoided the slippery paths of bureaucracy'.

During 1952 and 1953 there was much official stress on the evils of 'bureaucratism'. The chief ideologist of the Yugoslav party, Milovan Djilas, analysed in detail, from a Marxist but anti-Stalinist point of view, the causes and nature of the degeneration of the Soviet regime, which had been created by a socialist revolution but had become a reactionary and bureaucratic form of state capitalism. He insisted that the mistakes of the Russian Bolsheviks could and would be avoided by the Yugoslav communists.

The Party held its 6th Congress in Zagreb from 2 to 7 November 1952. It took the new name League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

<sup>1</sup> At the republican elections, a few independents were returned in Macedonia.

It continued to be organised on the strictest principles of 'democratic centralism'. This of course conflicted with, and limited the effectiveness of, the decentralisation that had been carried out in local government and in the factory councils. The official answer to this was that the League's task was to inspire and persuade the administrators, not to do the administering themselves. Administration should be left to trained civil servants. But to distinguish between political leadership and civil administration is less simple than the ideologists seemed to think. In the Soviet Union ever since the 8th Congress of 1919 it has been official doctrine that the Party must 'direct but not replace' the organs of government. But this has not prevented the growth of bureaucracy which is so rightly denounced by the Yugoslav leaders, and has even been severely and frequently criticised in the Soviet press for more than thirty years.

Djilas himself was not afraid of the logical conclusions to his arguments. By the autumn of 1953 his articles were indirectly but clearly suggesting that the political monopoly of the League should be brought to an end, and political opposition be allowed. In January 1954 he published in a monthly review of which he was editor, *Nova Misao*, an article entitled 'The Anatomy of a Morale'. This was a savage attack on the new ruling caste which, he maintained, had taken clear shape since the revolution, and was infected with the same arrogance and snobbery as the dispossessed former bourgeoisie.<sup>1</sup> This provoked an explosion of wrath from the higher and medium levels of the party hierarchy. A special plenary meeting of the Central Committee was summoned on 16 and 17 January 1954. Tito and the other leaders, who had tolerated Djilas's writings hitherto, now turned against him, and he was expelled from the Central Committee. He gave up his editorships and his post as President of the parliament.

It now looked as if a period of tighter dictatorship would follow. Another plenary meeting of the Central Committee was held in Belgrade at the end of March. It reasserted the leading role of the League. There was some emphasis on the need to increase its control over education and over intellectual life in general. But little changed in the following months. There was no

<sup>1</sup> It was mainly concerned with the story of a young actress who had married a general, a hero of the war of liberation, and had been persecuted by the wives of other notables, who regarded the marriage as an unpardonable intrusion by an outsider into the closed clique of high revolutionary society. The article contained a remarkable variety of coarse abuse.

attempt to impose a *Zhdanovshchina* on Yugoslav intellectuals. Literature and the arts were not regimented. The regime remained dictatorial but did not become totalitarian. There was no political opposition or controversy, but in non-political matters there was a good deal of freedom. The regime tells its subjects what they may not do or say: it does not, like the totalitarian regimes of the Soviet Union and the Popular Democracies, tell them what they have got to say and think. It claims only their public actions, not their private lives.

In agriculture there were big changes in the last three years. In June 1952 compulsory deliveries of cereals to the state were abolished. In July Tito insisted that collective farms must be developed according to local conditions, not treated as a matter of sacred dogma. Where collective farms were not justified by local conditions, they should be disbanded. During the next months many were in fact disbanded. In March 1953 a decree permitted the liquidation of any collective farm where the majority desired it. In the next weeks there was a mass exodus of peasants, who were allowed to take back the land which they had originally brought into the collective. The result was in many areas to leave the originally landless or very poor peasants stranded in collectives with hardly any land to cultivate. To help them, the government introduced a new land reform law, passed by the Assembly on 22 May, which expropriated, against compensation to be spread over 20 years, all private land in excess of 10 hectares. Under the land reform of 1945 the maximum land left in private ownership had been 20 to 35 hectares. The expropriated land was to form a 'land fund' from which collective farms of poorer peasants would be endowed.

Relations between the government and the peasants were still far from good. The peasants distrusted the government's intentions, and government officials for the most part still had the patronising attitude to the peasants characteristic of Marxists. There were ambitious plans for the improvement of agriculture, whose fulfilment would undoubtedly benefit the peasants. But these were to be carried out from above and from outside. Much was to be done for the peasants, but little by them. To rely on direct incentives, on the peasants' own initiative, was contrary to party doctrine. Nevertheless there is no doubt that the official attitude was less dogmatic, more flexible and more realistic than it had been in the 1940's. In agriculture as in all branches of the national economy, the Yugoslav leaders were learning from

experience. Western economic advice, though often resented, had been often heeded, and had produced some positive results. Much was also due to the intelligent actions of individual experts and individual local organisations.

The old antagonisms between the nationalities of Yugoslavia had certainly not disappeared, but they were much less dangerous than they had been. There were many complaints against centralism, but this was felt to be the work of a central government, not, as between the wars, of a Serbian hegemony. The people of the more advanced regions complained that they were forced to pay for the development of the more backward. This was certainly true, but the distinction cut across ethnical barriers. The Slovenes, the Slavonian Croats and the Serbs of the Danubian plainlands had to pay for the Croats of Dalmatia, the Serbs of Bosnia and the Macedonians. And heavy though the cost might be, it had to be borne. The people of the backward areas could not continue to live in their old poverty, and the country as a whole needed the resources of these regions which had so long lain undeveloped.

The government's hostility to religion remained undiminished. In the summer of 1953 there were a number of officially sponsored mob attacks on both Catholic and Orthodox bishops. The Moslems were more submissive to the regime, but they too were discontented. It can hardly be said that religion is actively persecuted in Yugoslavia, but the various forms of discrimination and insult to which both priests and practising laymen were subjected are certainly a major cause of discontent.

#### GREECE

The government of the left centre formed as a result of the election of September 1951 had a very precarious majority in parliament, was vigorously opposed by Field-Marshal Papagos' Greek Rally, and was dependent on the support of a few independent members. After a year of weak government it was decided to hold a new election. Before parliament was dissolved, a new electoral law was passed, which abolished proportional representation and substituted simple majority vote in each constituency. The election was held on 16 November 1952. The Greek Rally won 49.6 per cent of the votes but this brought it 239 out of 300 seats. The centre parties—Venizelos' Liberals and Plastiras' National Progressive Union (E.P.E.K.)—had 36 per cent of the votes and 61 seats, while the United Democratic Front

(E.D.A.), the communist-led extreme left, won 10 per cent of the votes but no seats.

Papagos formed a government on 23 November 1952. His most important colleague was Spiro Markezinis, who became Minister of Co-ordination. The new government possessed an advantage which no Greek administration had had since the war, a stable majority and the prospect of several years in office. In the preceding period the insecurity of government coalitions, and the consequent absence of any firm political leadership, had been the most serious obstacle to economic and social progress. At last there seemed a hope that resolute action would be taken. The Field-Marshal enjoyed enormous prestige throughout the country, and especially in the provincial towns and villages. Markezinis was generally recognised as a man of ability and energy. It was not so much that he had new ideas as that he was prepared to take responsibility and to go ahead. In April 1953 he devalued the drachma to a comparatively realistic exchange rate, and this quickly benefited Greek exports of agricultural produce and cotton textiles, though it damaged other branches of industry which had enjoyed artificially favourable conditions. Prices began to rise, but much less rapidly than the pessimists predicted, and by the end of 1954 a major inflation had still been avoided. Markezinis' policy improved Greece's economic prospects, though it imposed hardships on the poorest sections of the urban population. Markezinis himself quarrelled with the Field-Marshal, and on 2 April 1954 resigned from the cabinet. On 11 November he resigned from the Rally, and sat in parliament as an independent member. Papagos, however, proved able to govern without Markezinis, continuing much the same economic policy.

The Rally has given Greece comparatively good government, but it has not performed miracles. In its first days of power it had something more than a party programme: it had a *mystique*. It was to rejuvenate and modernise Greek politics. It was to put an end to the age of petty struggles between personalities and cliques. It was to fight corruption and nepotism, to give greater freedom to local initiative, to curb the power of Athens over the whole country, to reduce the numbers of the vast bureaucratic host. But these things proved easier to promise than to achieve. The inflation of the bureaucratic machine was a substitute, in an 'under-developed' country, for social services. To dismiss redundant bureaucrats sounded admirable: to throw decent Greek men and women on to the streets was another matter. At once there would

be a flood of protests from their relatives, most of whom would turn out to be worthy provincial supporters of the Rally. Previous governments had not dared to face this indignation: the Rally did not dare either. By mid-1955 the main asset of the Rally was the prestige of the Marshal. In fact the movement which had started out to replace personalities by ideas, cliques by policies, had turned into one more political group built around a leader.

One rather alarming feature of the Greek scene was the apathy of the intelligentsia, and especially of the young. Between the world wars university students and graduates had been politically minded to excess. Superficially it might seem a good thing that they should spend less time talking about politics. It is all to the good that they should devote their energies to their daily work. But apathy is not a healthy state of mind, least of all to so lively a people as the Greeks. Years of native fascism, foreign occupation, civil war and economic frustration have left mental fatigue. The old battle cries of nationalism, democracy or socialism have lost their magic. Nothing has taken their place. In a country with the social structure of Greece, the intelligentsia is bound to play an important part, positive or negative. This is a problem which Greek political leaders cannot afford for much longer to ignore.

At the end of 1954 it was clear that the Rally's popularity was declining at least in the towns. On 21 November municipal elections brought some striking victories for the left. Kartalis, a former Finance Minister, was elected mayor of Volos. An able man of progressive views, he was no friend of communists, but communist votes helped to put him in power. In Salonica on 28 November the municipal elections showed a definite increase in communist votes.

There is very little prospect that the communists will again become a major force in Greece, at least as long as they are associated with Soviet and Bulgarian policies. But Greece's real troubles remain poverty and wastage. Her basic material resources are few, she has suffered more than almost any country from the barriers to world trade that have grown up in the last decades, and ever since the Asia Minor expulsions she has been acutely overpopulated. For a long time ahead Greece will depend on foreign economic aid. This may be irritating for Americans and humiliating for Greeks, but it has to be recognised and endured by both. That they are resolved to do their utmost to help themselves, the engineers and soldiers and workers and peasants of Greece have abundantly shown.

## BALKAN PROBLEMS

The most important single state in the area between the Alps and the Black Sea Straits, by virtue both of her military resources and of her strategic position, is Yugoslavia. The place of the Balkan Peninsula in world politics and world strategy is thus largely determined by Yugoslavia's policy.

During 1952 and 1953 Yugoslavia's relations with the Western Powers, and with their Balkan allies Greece and Turkey, steadily improved. On 28 February 1953 the Yugoslav, Greek and Turkish foreign ministers signed in Ankara a treaty of friendship and co-operation. In March 1953 President Tito paid an official visit to Britain. He paid similar visits to Turkey in April 1954 and to Greece in June 1954. During the spring and summer diplomatic consultations prepared the strengthening of the Ankara Pact of 1953. In this the initiative came from Yugoslavia, with some reserve on the Greek and Turkish sides, due in large part to the unsolved antagonism between Yugoslavia and Italy. Both Greece and Turkey were bound to Italy by common membership of N.A.T.O., to which Yugoslavia did not, and apparently did not wish to, belong. Difficulties were, however, overcome, and on 4 August 1954 the three foreign ministers met at Bled, and signed a twenty-year treaty of alliance, political co-operation and mutual assistance. All three were committed to military support of any of their number which should be the victim of military attack.

This alliance could only be welcomed by the Western Powers, as it potentially contributed to the defence of the whole East Mediterranean area. A serious obstacle to this defence appeared, however, in the growth of serious tension between Greece and Britain in connection with Cyprus. Though Cyprus had never belonged to a Greek state, there is certainly a strong case for its unification with Greece on general ethnical grounds. There can be no doubt that some 80 per cent of the Cypriots feel themselves to be Greeks, and that a large part of these positively desire union (*enosis*). For their part the people of Greece have reason to feel, both that they have shown themselves so loyal an ally of Britain that they are entitled to consideration of their claims, and that the Greeks of Cyprus are not less capable of making up their own minds than the Africans of the Gold Coast, whose claims have been largely satisfied by British governments. It is also true that British spokesmen, both in Cyprus and in Westminster, have been guilty at times of monumental tactlessness. Nevertheless the faults

are not all on one side. The Greek government did not choose a very propitious moment for its claims, when after months of unpleasant negotiations Britain had at last accepted a rather unsatisfactory settlement of the Suez dispute with Egypt, and when Cyprus was to be built up as a N.A.T.O. base. Nor did it show much tact in its treatment of its Turkish ally. Cyprus was Turkish territory until 1878, it lies close to the Turkish mainland, and about 20 per cent of its population are Turks. British spokesmen have made much of the rights of the Turkish minority. To Greek nationalists this appeared to be an insincere manœuvre, yet another case of British imperialistic *divide et impera* tactics, of which the conflicts between India and Pakistan, Arabs and Jews or Irish Catholics and Protestants are so widely believed to be examples. Perhaps it was for this reason that the Greek government does not appear to have taken Turkish objections to *enosis* seriously, or to have consulted the Turkish government through diplomatic channels before bringing the Cyprus problem before the United Nations. It found, however, that Turkish objections were serious, and that Turkey opposed the Greek case. In short, the Cyprus crisis has seriously worsened Greece's relations with both Britain and Turkey, and to that extent weakened East Mediterranean defence.

From the summer of 1953 onwards the Soviet government has made valiant efforts to undermine the Balkan position from the other end, by wooing Yugoslavia away from the West. It was of course supported by the Danubian Popular Democracies. A new Soviet Ambassador was appointed to Belgrade in June 1953. Hungary and Bulgaria did the same in August and September respectively. Chervenkov in his speech of 9 September expressed his desire for better relations not only with Yugoslavia but also with Greece, Turkey and the United States. Minor agreements on frontier incidents were in fact achieved in the following months with Bulgaria's three Balkan neighbours. During 1954, however, it could hardly be claimed that Soviet diplomacy had made much progress in Yugoslavia. President Tito continued to stress his friendly relations with the West and with his Balkan allies, but also insisted that Yugoslavia was pursuing a policy of complete independence, bound to Greece and Turkey where Balkan security was concerned but uncommitted to either of the Power Blocks. This was reinforced by the interest taken for some time by the Yugoslav government in Asian affairs. Especially cordial relations had grown up with Burma. Ideologically the Yugoslav and

Burmese governments considered themselves very near to each other. Both were Marxist, non-Stalinist and anti-imperialist. Both believed in an uncommitted policy. In December 1954 President Tito paid a state visit to India, and proceeded at the end of the year to Burma.

Soviet advances to Yugoslavia reached a climax with the visit to Yugoslavia in June 1955 of a Soviet delegation headed by Bulganin and Hrushchov. This amounted to an admission that the whole previous Soviet treatment of Yugoslavia had been wrong, and that 'national communism' was not necessarily mortal sin. The implications for the Popular Democracies might be far-reaching. At the same time, however, it might be expected to have produced a good impression within the Yugoslav Communist Party, to have revived old emotional attitudes towards Russia and to have increased the unwillingness of *les plus purs* to be tied to the West. It is most improbable that Tito, with all his knowledge and experience of Soviet affairs, would be greatly affected by Hrushchov's blandishments, but the impact on his subordinates cannot easily be estimated.

It must therefore be admitted that the Balkan defence system, on paper rather impressive, was weak at several points. The one firm base remained Turkey, the central strategic position of the Western Alliance in the Eastern Mediterranean. The strength of the central position, however, largely depends on its two flanks, in the Balkans and towards the Persian Gulf. The eastern flank was less exposed in 1955 than in 1951, as a result of the Turkish-Pakistan and Turkish-Iraq pacts and of the more favourable developments in Persia since the overthrow of Mosaddeq. On the western flank, despite the Cyprus affair and Soviet approaches to Yugoslavia, the situation was fairly good. The existence of the Balkan Alliance remains a deterrent at least to the Popular Democracies. It has removed any temptation that Moscow may once have had to use Hungarian, Rumanian or Bulgarian forces in a limited adventure, of the Korean type, in the Balkans. And that at least represents a real gain for Turkey.

At the north-west corner of the Balkan Peninsula relations between Yugoslavia and Italy remained for some time a serious nuisance for Western policy. With the formation of the Pella government in Rome in the late summer of 1953 tension increased. There were movements of troops and fiery speeches on both sides. On 8 October the British and United States governments made an ill-judged declaration of their intention to hand over Zone 'A'

of the Trieste Free Territory to Italy. The Yugoslav government organised 'demonstrations' to smash British and American offices in Belgrade and other Yugoslav towns. When the Western governments decided, in view of Yugoslav reactions, to postpone execution of their decision, Italian rowdies smashed British offices in Rome. After some months tempers cooled and diplomacy took up the task again. The replacement of Pella by Scelba as Italian Premier made things easier. In October 1954 an agreement was at last signed in London by Italian, Yugoslav, American and British representatives. Italy ceded a small strip of Zone 'A', with about 4,000 inhabitants, mostly Slovene, and annexed the rest. Zone 'B' was incorporated in Yugoslavia together with the strip. Nationalist opinion was dissatisfied on both sides, and there was still a long way to go before Italo-Yugoslav relations could be considered good. Mutual distrust with regard to Albania, and memories of Yugoslav cruelty to Italian subjects in 1945 and of much greater Italian cruelty to Yugoslavs in 1941-3, remained strong impediments. But though the Trieste problem had formed only a part of the wider Italo-Yugoslav antagonism, it had been its largest single cause. The acceptance of a negotiated settlement, even if it was not a very good settlement, was real progress.

Yugoslavia's relations with Austria enormously improved in the 1950's. There was no more talk on either side of Carinthian border problems. The conclusion of a State Treaty for Austria in May 1955 opened a new chapter in Austria's history. The neutralisation of Austria was welcome to the Yugoslavs, for it fitted well with President Tito's ideas of an uncommitted policy.

#### THE GERMAN PROBLEM

Germany remains the most important international problem affecting Europe, western and eastern alike. The economic recovery, and peaceful political development, of Western Germany have given a new urgency to the desire of 70 million Germans for unity and independence.

The aims of Soviet policy towards Germany are unchanged. There is a long-term aim and a short-term aim. The first is to incorporate the whole of Germany in the Soviet Empire, the second to create maximum hatred between Western Germany and the other Powers of Western Europe and North America.

The prospects for the long-term aim, which amounts to the extension of the Ulbricht-Pieck regime to the whole of Germany,

have been discouraging for some time. Theoretically this might be achieved by one of three methods.

The first is to convince the German people, by example and by propaganda, of the merits of the popular democratic regime, as practised by Ulbricht and Pieck. If the Soviet leaders had any illusions on this point, they were rudely dispelled by the national rising in the Soviet zone in June 1953. It is worth stressing that it was the industrial workers, the class in which the communists believed themselves to have the most support, which led the rising, and that its demands were not so much economic as political. The East German workers' first wish was the overthrow of the S.E.D. regime. If the mass emigration from the Soviet zone during the winter of 1952-3 had not already enlightened West German opinion as to the nature of the Ulbricht regime, the events of June 1953 did so. The Soviet leaders can have derived little comfort from the general election of September 1953, which triumphantly confirmed Chancellor Adenauer in power. The second German party, the Social Democrats, were known to be no less hostile to communism and to the Ulbricht regime than were Adenauer's Christian Democrats. During 1954 the Soviet authorities greatly reduced restrictions on travel between Western and Eastern Germany. Thousands of West Germans were thus enabled to visit their relatives and friends in the eastern zone. What they saw did not increase their liking for popular democracy.

The two other methods of extending the Ulbricht regime to the whole of Germany are war and diplomatic manoeuvre. If the aggression in Korea had succeeded, Moscow might well have repeated it in Germany, using well-equipped East German and East European troops for the purpose. But the lessons of Korea were different, and there is every indication that the present Soviet leaders do not intend to risk a general war. There remains the diplomatic method. Essentially this amounts to securing an agreed settlement, with Western Germany and with the Western Powers, for reunification of Germany in such conditions as to assure the German communists sufficient key positions in the state machine to enable them, at a later stage, to seize sole power. The aim, in fact, would be to create an united German government comparable to the Czechoslovak government of 1945. The Czech communists had enough real power to be able three years later to seize power when Moscow gave the word. The procedures hitherto suggested by the Soviet government for the preparation of German unity have in fact clearly conformed to this pattern.

But though Western or West German statesmen might have been deceived by these manœuvres ten years ago, there is small chance that they will succumb to-day. The lessons of Košice 1945 and Prague 1948 have been learned.

If then the long-term Soviet aim for Germany cannot be attained in the predictable future, Moscow must be content with the short-term aim—maximum hatred between Germany and the West. Here the prospects are less remote. Soviet policy has in fact been concentrating on this aim for about three years. It is widely believed that the adoption of a more flexible policy in Moscow was the result of Stalin's death, and that Malenkov was a 'moderate'. Whether Hrushchov will continue Malenkov's 'moderate' line or return to Stalin's 'extremism', is a favourite theme of political commentators. It would of course be foolish to deny the importance of Stalin's personality, or to ignore evidence of the personal inclinations of his successors. But the turning-point in Soviet tactics preceded Stalin's death. The new policy, of substituting for a frontal attack on the 'capitalist world' a systematic exploitation of the 'contradictions of capitalism', with the aim of provoking a new war between 'capitalist states', is clearly laid down in Stalin's last published work, *Economic Problems of Socialism*, which appeared in the autumn of 1952.

Applied to Germany, this principle requires the creation of an independent united Germany. The subsequent task of Soviet policy would be to promote maximum conflict between this united Germany and the Western Powers, or perhaps to win her over to the Soviet camp.

This policy would, however, involve unpleasant decisions and enormous risks for the Soviet Union. The Ulbricht regime would have to be sacrificed. This would be a blow to the prestige of communism throughout the world, and to convinced communists in the Soviet Union it would appear treachery. Moreover it could be by no means certain that a united Germany would not take the side of the West against the Soviet Union.

The uncertainties of this gamble have caused Soviet policy in the German question to vacillate. Stalin was hardly the man to give up his hold on 18 million people in exchange for a mere hope of future returns. But at least if he had decided to do so, he had the authority to put his plans into practice. The same could not be said of his successors. The rising of June 1953 increased their difficulties. The June events showed the East German security forces to be incompetent: only the Soviet Army saved the regime.

The failure of the police was a severe blow to the prestige of the supreme Soviet police chief Beria, one of the competitors for the succession to Stalin. It can hardly be doubted, though direct evidence is not available, that the June events provided the occasion for Beria's enemies, among whom must certainly be reckoned the Army leaders, to overthrow him two weeks later. But with the struggle for the succession still in progress, and these events fresh in all minds, it was difficult to imagine that any of the Soviet leaders would expose himself to the charge of betraying the strategic interests of the Soviet Union and the cause of communism, by proposing that the Ulbricht regime be sacrificed. And in fact in the following months full support was given to Ulbricht. The authority of the S.E.D. was reinforced, there were concessions in the economic but not in the political field, and the public statements of Soviet spokesmen made it clear that they regarded the regime in the Soviet zone as the model for the 'truly democratic' order of the Germany of the future.

The inflexible Soviet attitude doomed to failure the Berlin conference of the Powers in January 1954. But disagreements between the American and West European governments on Asian affairs, both before and after the Geneva conference, and the rejection by France of the European Defence Community suggested that a more supple policy would be more successful. The signature and ratification of the West European Union treaty in 1954-5 were a further set-back to Moscow, but the abundant evidence of the impatience of West German public opinion in regard to unification was an encouragement.

In mid-1955 Soviet policy towards Germany remained uncertain. There were indications that Moscow still sought a solution on the lines of the Gottwald government of Košice. Contrary indications suggested that Moscow might be willing to sacrifice Ulbricht and permit a genuinely independent united Germany, with armed forces of its own, provided that Germany severed its links with the West and committed itself to some form of permanent neutrality. For this the State Treaty signed with Austria appeared to provide a precedent. Either of these policies might make sense from a Soviet point of view, but they were not compatible with each other.

Neither policy could be acceptable to the Western Powers. A 'Košice government', designed in due course to lead to another 'February 1948', was of course clearly out of the question. But a 'neutrality' solution was equally incompatible with Western

interests, even if certain sections of British and French public opinion did not understand this. There are two reasons why this is so.

An independent neutral Germany in the middle of Europe might be acceptable to all, provided that there were independent peaceful states to its west and east. Indeed some such situation as this was probably in the minds of most thoughtful West Europeans and Americans during the last part of the Second World War. Germany would be disarmed but united, and would be surrounded by independent France, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. But this possibility was destroyed by the action of the Soviet government. Stalin decided to enslave 100 million East Europeans, thereby destroying not only the independence of the Poles and Czechs but also the whole European balance. Once this was done, the balance could not be restored in favour of the West without including Germany. Germany could no longer be left a vacuum in the middle of the continent: she was needed for the self-defence of the West. Equally the West was indispensable for the self-defence of Germany. When Soviet or communist or pro-communist commentators speak of a 'neutral belt' in Europe, the question at once arises, 'neutral from whom?' The Soviet aim is that Germany, and in due course also Italy or other Western states, should be detached from the Western Alliance, but that the East European states which have been forcibly tied to the Soviet Union should remain so tied. But neutrality can only be made a basis of discussion if it is not unilateral. A neutral united Germany can only be considered if Eastern Europe is also to be neutral. And this means not only that the Ulbricht regime be abandoned, but that the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Danubian states be enabled freely to choose their own rulers and their own international friendships. If these conditions were fulfilled, it might be possible to organise some form of neutralisation, or of mutual security, for the whole region between the Rhine and the Russian frontier, or indeed for the whole continent. But without freedom for Eastern Europe, the slogan of German neutrality is no more than a device to ensure Soviet military domination of the Old World.

The second objection to unilateral neutralisation of Germany arises out of the first. A united Germany separated from the West would at once be subjected to tempting territorial offers from the Soviet side. If unity had been bought at the price of neutralisation, part or all of the Oder-Neisse lands and the

Sudeten provinces could be sold for positive adherence by Germany to the Soviet camp. It is unlikely that the present political leaders of West Germany—who would presumably still be in power in united Germany—would be responsive. Not only Adenauer, but also the Social Democrat leaders, have a healthy distrust for Soviet manoeuvres. But there are certainly strong forces in Germany to whom such a bargain would appeal. Hatred of the Anglo-Saxons, contempt for Poles and Czechs, an arrogant assumption that in any German-Russian partnership the German is bound to prevail, finally a basic preference for totalitarian government over democratic, all combine to move large sections of the German people. These are barely visible on the surface of West German politics in 1955, but they exist none the less. Economic difficulties might give them their chance. It is a risk that the West cannot take.

The problem of Germany's eastern frontier remains a real one. Some day there must be a settlement between the German, Polish and Czech peoples. In 1945 millions of innocent Germans suffered cruel hardships. These followed six years of cruel German oppression in the Czech lands, and of much more cruel German oppression in Poland. Both sides have ample grounds for both bitterness and shame. That the Germans should wish to return to the situation of 1937 is understandable, but not morally justifiable. If this were done, the German people would have made no atonement to the Poles for the monstrous crimes of Hitler's regime. This does not, however, mean that the Oder-Neisse frontier should be regarded as sanctified for all time. If the Sudeten Germans were to return in a body to the Sudeten provinces, and resume possession of their land and property, the German people would have made no atonement to the Czechs for the cruelties that Hitler inflicted on them. This does not, however, mean that those Sudeten Germans who sincerely desire to live in peace and friendship with the Czech people and can show that they had no part in the crimes of Hitler and Henlein and Heydrich should for all time be banished from their homes.

These matters can only be settled by direct negotiation between Germans and Poles and between Germans and Czechs. At present there can be no negotiations, because free Germany is cut off from Poland by the Soviet zone, and because both Poles and Czechs are ruled by men not chosen by them but imposed on them by Soviet violence. When there is a united independent Germany, the problem will become more real. Germany will then

have two possible courses of action. One is to bargain with the Soviet Union at the expense of Poles and Czechs, to return to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. This pact brought Germany nothing but disaster. Moreover the relationship between Germany and Russia is now fundamentally and permanently different from what it was in 1939. There can be no question of a partnership between equals, still less of a German predominance. The only relationship with Russia, into which Germany can enter alone, is one of vassalage. The alternative is that Germany should negotiate directly with Poles and Czechs. This is the true interest of Germany, of Poland and of Czechoslovakia. It is also the true interest of Europe. But it cannot happen until Poland and Czechoslovakia are free.

The only alternative to Germany's absorption in the Soviet Empire is that Germany should settle her relations with Poles and Czechs by direct negotiation. Until this is possible, Germany has no alternative to the Western Alliance. Meanwhile the Western Powers should, and no doubt will, make every effort to obtain the unification of Germany on acceptable terms.

The only alternative for the Poles and Czechs to being made the object of cynical bargains by the Soviet Union, is that they should themselves obtain a direct settlement with Germany. This will be possible only when they are independent of Moscow. This should be apparent, not only to Polish and Czech democrats, but also to many who are members of the communist parties of both countries. It cannot of course be expected that such puppets as Bierut or Čepička will admit this even to themselves.

To German or Polish or Czech nationalists these truths may seem disagreeable, but they are truths none the less. Western friends of the Poles or Germans or Czechs will do them no service if they encourage them to think otherwise.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### EAST AND WEST

WHEN the war ended, public opinion in the West hoped and believed that co-operation between the victorious Great Powers would ensure European and world peace. The two half-European Powers, Britain and Russia, the greatest World Power, the United States, and the oldest European Power, France, would together keep order and protect liberty. Yet only a year after Hitler's armies surrendered, Mr. Vyshinsky and Mr. Bevin were exchanging insults at formal sessions of the United Nations, and a year after that Soviet propaganda was accusing the 'American imperialists and their British labourite jackals' of following in the steps of Hitler. And there was this much truth in the accusation, that each side was using against the other the very arguments that for many years Goebbels had used. One may imagine the little doctor, in whatever nethermost region of inferno he now inhabits, his ghostly features illumined by a diabolic smile. At least the evil that he did seems likely to live after him.

It has been suggested that the Western Powers began it by complaining of the Soviet action in Rumania in February 1945, though they had agreed that Rumania was to be the Soviet sphere while Greece was the British, and the Soviet leaders had observed their part of the bargain by silence when British troops destroyed E.L.A.S. This is a good debating-point, but no more. The hostility and contempt in which Soviet citizens had been taught to hold their Western allies were much older than Tehran or Yalta. They became quickly obvious to Westerners whose duties put them in contact with the Red Army, and perhaps nowhere so quickly or so clearly as in the defeated satellite countries Rumania and Bulgaria. Soviet officers sometimes deliberately insulted their Western colleagues on the Allied Control Commissions, but more often they unintentionally antagonised them. And it would be unfair to deny that American and British representatives often lacked tact or understanding.<sup>1</sup> But the difference was that

<sup>1</sup> For an intelligent and scrupulously fair account of this relationship see Barker *Truce in the Balkans*, chapter 5.

whereas the Americans and British were at times discourteous or stupid, the Soviet commanders assumed from the beginning that their allies were their mortal enemies, and would always and everywhere oppose their aims and help their enemies. Therefore, every Rumanian who was friendly with Americans must be an enemy of the U.S.S.R., and every Bulgarian who genuinely wished well to the U.S.S.R. must hate the British. This basic attitude of Soviet officers was not the result of their own experience and thought: it was ordered by the policy-makers in Moscow.

To Westerners it still seems incredible that the Soviet Union, which possessed in 1945 such a wealth of admiration and goodwill in the West, should have wantonly thrown it away. To communists in the Soviet Union and elsewhere this way of putting the problem is an example of naïve petty-bourgeois idealism. The goodwill, as they saw it, was not an asset worth having. The parliamentary politicians, journalists and speakers in Western countries who in the war years poured forth praise of the U.S.S.R. are the helpless puppets of the great capitalists. The great capitalists, who run the Western democracies from behind the scenes, hate the U.S.S.R., and as soon as their opportunity came would inevitably switch the whole publicity machine on to anti-Soviet propaganda. The only friends worth having in the Western countries are those who are prepared devotedly to serve the U.S.S.R.—that is, the communists, their sympathisers, and the small army of secret paid agents of the Soviet state. All other friends are worthless. The only realistic policy for the U.S.S.R. was therefore to pursue her own independent course, seizing every tangible advantage that circumstances offered, building up her own strength, trusting to it alone, and awaiting the inevitable open conflict of interest with the Western capitalists. If her realistic actions enabled the servile pen-pushers and other lackeys of the capitalists to accuse the U.S.S.R. of oppressing small nations, trampling on liberties, and so forth, that could not be helped. The reliable servants of the Soviet cause in *partibus infidelium* would do their duty anyhow: the others were not worth winning. The human race outside the territories controlled by the Soviet government falls into two categories—agents and enemies. In the controlled territories and the Soviet Union itself, there are three categories—communists, slaves and enemies.

Soviet policy is based, as it has been since 1917, on the dogma that conflict between the Soviet and capitalist worlds is inevitable. The Soviet Union may of course conclude temporary

alliances with individual capitalist states or groups of capitalist states. Soviet diplomacy should at all times exploit to the advantage of the U.S.S.R. all 'contradictions' within the capitalist world. But basically the whole capitalist world is hostile to the Soviet world, and has a permanent tendency to unite against it. The Soviet Union will not be secure until capitalism has been overthrown in the most powerful states of the world. And by the Soviet definition, all the advanced industrial states of Europe and North America are capitalist states, the U.S.S.R. is the only state in which socialism has triumphed, and the Soviet-dominated states are the only states in which socialism is being built. The social democrat parties of Western Europe are not socialist parties at all, but instruments of the capitalists to deceive the workers, their leaders conscious instruments and their masses unconscious instruments.

It is not true that, because Stalin launched the slogan 'Socialism in one country' against Trotsky, therefore Stalin abandoned the aim of world revolution. Stalin believed that the Soviet Union possessed the internal conditions necessary for socialism. She had the natural resources and the man-power: he believed that the man-power could be trained and coerced to create from the resources a mighty industry that would form the foundation of a socialist state. On these points he disagreed with Trotsky, and to-day he and his supporters maintain that history has proved him right and Trotsky wrong. But Stalin always held that socialism in the U.S.S.R. would be in danger as long as 'capitalist encirclement' continued. The spread of revolution was therefore essential to the permanent success of Russian socialism. Moreover it was the duty of every Soviet communist to pursue world revolution for its own sake. Stalin has shown himself ruthless and unscrupulous in dealing with personal rivals. But this does not prove, as many Western observers arbitrarily assume, that he and his close collaborators are mere cynics. The evidence is rather that they have remained faithful to the revolutionary cause, waiting only for a favourable moment. This came when the collapse of Nazi Germany opened to the Soviet armies the Baltic and the Danube valley.<sup>1</sup>

Whether what the Soviet armies and political experts have spread to Eastern Europe is socialism, and whether the process by

<sup>1</sup> For a careful discussion of the positions of Trotsky and Stalin, and of what was meant and was not meant by 'socialism in one country', see Deutscher, *Stalin*, pp. 281-93.

which they have spread it can be called a revolution, is another question. Trotsky argued during his exile that what Stalin had created was not socialism but a bureaucratic despotism which marked the degeneration of a great revolution. One does not need to accept all Trotsky's assumptions or arguments in order to hold that the Soviet system is something utterly different from what socialism has meant to generations of European socialist workers and thinkers, or that its recent extension to Eastern Europe has been achieved not by revolution but by foreign conquest. Soviet policy aims at world revolution in the sense that its makers believe that to be their aim. Its execution, however, as seen by non-communists outside the U.S.S.R., looks quite different. Probably the best neutral description is that adopted by a recent historian of Soviet foreign policy—'extension of the area of sovietisation'.<sup>1</sup>

Western commentators on Soviet affairs often raise the question 'Is Soviet policy a continuation of the imperialism of the Tsars, or is it a new and revolutionary policy?' This question is wrongly put. There is no complete contradiction between the two. Soviet policy is revolutionary in the sense in which we have described it above. It is also a continuation of Tsarist policy in so far as, like the foreign policy of all states, it is largely determined by geography, and the geography of the U.S.S.R. is much the same as the geography of Imperial Russia. The areas in which Soviet policy is in contact with the policy of the 'encircling capitalist states' are the same areas in which the policy of Imperial Russia met the policy of the rival Great Powers—Austria, Germany and Britain. These areas are Scandinavia, the Balkans, the Straits, Turkey, Persia and Manchuria. The collapse of Germany and Japan, however, has enabled the Soviet Union to extend her influence to the Elbe and the Yangtse. Inevitably, many of the controversies between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union concern the same areas as the controversies between the European Powers fifty or a hundred years ago. The content and aims of Soviet policy are different from those of Imperial Russian policy, but the forms are often similar. And forms sometimes even affect content.

The question whether Soviet policy is imperialistic raises some interesting points of communist terminology. If the British government owns shares in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, that is imperialism. If American air lines possess valuable concessions

<sup>1</sup> Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, vol. 2, p. 394.

in South American republics, that is imperialism. But if the Soviet government owns a third of Rumania's oil, half her timber, and monopolies of air and river transport in Rumania and Hungary, that is not imperialism. If Americans or British have concessions in the uranium of the Belgian Congo, that is imperialism and war-mongering: if Czechoslovakia's uranium mines are exploited by Soviet personnel for the benefit of the U.S.S.R. that is socialist comradeship. But the Soviet Union not only has the right of transit for her troops through Eastern Europe, and her own army officers and police officials in high advisory and even executive posts in the East European countries: she also has large numbers of civilian officials in key positions. The Soviet state banks and state trusts have their men in the 'liberated' countries. Soviet bankers and managers sit in well-carpeted offices in Bucarest and Warsaw and Budapest and Prague and Sofia, not to mention Tirana, the Alma-Ata of the Balkans. They differ from the American managers in Rio, or the British managers in Tehran, only in their much greater power to inspire fear and compel obedience.

No one can understand Eastern Europe to-day who has not learned something of Soviet terminology. Statements which at first sight appear absurd become obvious when the special use of language is understood. For instance, 'peace' means the 'achievement of Soviet aims'; 'national independence' means a state of subjection to Moscow, and of political warfare with the West; the 'broad popular masses' are all who support Soviet policy. Thus, India is not independent but Rumania is: India's policy is made in Delhi, Rumania's in Moscow. Such statements as 'Soviet policy wholeheartedly pursues the cause of peace', or 'The Soviet Union favours the national independence of small nations', or 'The broad popular masses of Britain abhor the policy of Bevin and support the British Communist Party's struggle for peace', when accurately interpreted, are found to be tautological, and, like all tautologies, are indubitably true.

But, if language is given to communist man to enable him to conceal his thoughts, and especially to confuse his opponent's thoughts, it sometimes affects his own thoughts. There is one phrase of communist speech which has important consequences. This is the phrase about the U.S.S.R. as the 'fatherland of the toilers'. All toilers the world over owe allegiance to their fatherland, whether they know it or not. And this obligation seems sometimes to extend even to persons who would not normally be

considered as toilers. Any action against the U.S.S.R. is treason. To declare war on the U.S.S.R. is not the same thing as to declare war on any other country. To invade Belgium or Greece may be reprehensible: to invade the U.S.S.R. is a crime against humanity. This Bárdossy, Tiso and Antonescu, none of whom were guilty of atrocities, found to their cost. Nor can these men be said to have taken part in Hitler's conspiracy of aggression. Of the three only Antonescu was initiated into the plans beforehand, and he took part in order to recover territory which the U.S.S.R. had arbitrarily seized from his country. But in the view of the Soviet government they had committed treason, and the courts of their native countries gave the verdicts that Soviet justice required.

Another significant illustration of the same mentality are the countless Soviet war memorials erected in both Allied and enemy countries in Eastern Europe. In Budapest a huge figure towers over the Danube from the Gellert hill, and in Berlin a colossal Red Army soldier holds a rifle in one hand and a baby in the other. Western observers at first glance would assume that these memorials are symbols of Soviet conquering might, intended to overawe the defeated enemy. But this is not the case. The Hungarians and Germans, and any other nation through whose country the Red Army may pass, are expected to regard the Red Army as *their* army, as their 'liberator' from their former oppressors. War memorials to the Red Army are therefore expressions of the people's gratitude, not of a foreign conqueror's might. Those who think otherwise must be reactionaries or fascists.

As long as Soviet policy is shaped by men of such an outlook, friendship and sincere co-operation (using these words in the normal European sense and not in the specialised Soviet sense, which means subjection to Soviet wishes) between the Soviet Union and the West is impossible. But this does not mean that an ideological war is inevitable. If not real peace, at least co-existence without war is perfectly possible. There will be danger spots. In Europe the most sensitive at present are in the Balkans. As long as the Greek rebellion continues with Albanian and Bulgarian support, peace will be in danger. Yugoslavia is possibly even more dangerous. Because hitherto the Soviet Union has not attempted military action against Tito, either by her own forces or by those of her satellites, it by no means follows that she will not attempt such action in the near future. The Western Powers

should consider beforehand what action they would take in this event. The Straits question has not attracted much attention since 1946, but the Soviet attitude is no less intransigent than it was. In Scandinavia there is no indication of immediate trouble, but the future of Finland is still an open question, and its effect on Swedish-Soviet relations must not be forgotten. But far the most important problem for relations between the U.S.S.R. and the West, and for the development of the East European regimes, is the German problem.

In all these difficult and dangerous problems, the only way to save peace is for the West to impress the Soviet rulers with its strength, unity and determination to defend its interests. And this must be done not only at a few moments of crisis, but all the time. And this is not easy. As long as one-third of the French and Italian nations vote communist, as long as Frenchmen fear the resurgence of Germany, as long as Germans regard the Western nations as enemies and exploiters, and as long as many Americans feel that Europe is a liability to be written off, the tasks of Western statesmanship will be difficult.

But even if Western statesmanship can perform the tasks, if peace can be saved and further Soviet expansion checked, a further question must arise. If Europe is to be divided in two, where is the line to be drawn? Is it to leave more than 100 million non-Russians, including German Protestants and Danubian Catholics whose culture binds them to the West, on the other side? If the 100 million are thoroughly absorbed in the Soviet economy, in the great Eurasian militarised *Grossraumwirtschaft* stretching from the Elbe to the Amur, if to the 200 million factory fodder and cannon fodder of the U.S.S.R. proper are added 100 million more skilled factory fodder and cannon fodder from Eastern Europe, will not the Eurasian bloc in twenty years' time be invincible: will it not be ready for the next stage of the triumphal march that is to sweep 'bourgeois civilisation' from the face of the earth?

These questions cannot be answered. Intellectual speculation about preventive wars is waste of time, for preventive wars are not a method that democracies of the Western type can apply, still less the Constitution of the United States. And even if the method were applicable, to plunge humanity into a new world war to forestall a future fear is not a course which a Western democrat can advocate. Every year of peace is a gain for humanity in the sense that it is a year saved from war. The gain can be of

real value to the West provided that no vital Western positions are surrendered and that the situation in Eastern Europe is carefully and constantly watched, in order that every weakness, every crack in the monolithic structure, may be exploited to press back Soviet influence.

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A favourite generalisation of Western commentators on Eastern Europe is that the new regimes, though they do not grant 'political democracy', and have in fact abolished such elements of it as existed in the region before the war, have given 'economic democracy' in its place. Many commentators argue that this change is to the advantage of the East European peoples. The main need of these peoples, they say, is an improvement of their miserable standard of living. Political liberty is something that most of them have never known and therefore do not miss. They want more bread and more work. They are incapable of appreciating liberty.

This theory, advanced sometimes with sympathy and sometimes with contempt, is a muddled mixture of truth and falsehood. It is true that the peoples of Eastern Europe have lived for generations in poverty, that in the last thirty years the poverty has on the whole increased, and that the peasant and worker want bread and jobs. It is also true that except in Czechoslovakia there was little political liberty before the war for any but the upper class, and that even they lost most of their liberties in the thirties. But it is not true that these peoples do not understand what liberty means and do not passionately desire it. Their crude but vivid notions of their national history and their simple but powerful religious convictions are the best proof of the contrary. Nor does it follow that economic improvement can be obtained only by political oppression. Economic reforms have long figured in the plans of democratic parties, especially peasant parties and social democrats. The combination of economic change and terror is not inevitable. It is a *résultat* of communist policy.

In the present regimes of Eastern Europe economic policy and political oppression are inseparable for three reasons. The first is that their political and economic institutions are slavishly copied from those of the Soviet Union, which their communist rulers are obliged to imitate. The second is that their foreign policy is inextricably tied to that of the Soviet Union, with all the consequences that must follow therefrom. The third is that such a

frantic pace of construction has been set that regimentation and exploitation of labour are unavoidable.

These three reasons are of course dependent on each other. Soviet foreign policy assumes that the capitalist world is conspiring to destroy the Soviet Union. Therefore war industry and the mining and metallurgy which supply it must have priority over all others. Foreign capital must be rigorously excluded, in order that there should be no contamination by bourgeois influences. This is not always given as the reason for excluding foreign capital. Much is made of past abuses of power by foreign capitalists. But in present conditions it would be possible to obtain foreign capital on much more favourable terms than in the past. Foreign business men realise, or can be made to realise, that they cannot treat European countries as colonies. If they were assured security from expropriation and a very moderate profit they could be induced to invest. But the Soviet leaders, and their East European communist supporters, do not want Western capital on any terms. In their view, every Westerner who is not a communist or approved fellow-traveller is a spy, a saboteur or a cultural corrupter: he is not wanted. Thus foreign skill cannot be used in significant quantities, and foreign machinery can only be imported to the extent that exports allow. Meanwhile construction must be pushed ahead by extracting the last ounce of labour from the few skilled workers and by dragooning the armies of the unskilled. And this is only possible by compulsion, that is by political terror. Thus the new regimes mean political oppression for all non-communists, and economic misery for great numbers of workers and peasants, for the sake of a promised economic prosperity in a more or less distant future.

Marx and his disciples analysed the social classes in bourgeois society, and explained their attitudes by their economic interests. Some future sociologist should analyse the interests of political classes in totalitarian society. Such a task is far beyond the scope of this book. But a word should be said of one important political class in the 'popular democracies', the police. Its first interest is the maintenance of internal and external insecurity. Every ambitious local informer has an interest in persuading his superiors that his district is riddled with sedition: for every fascist, reactionary or deviationist 'unmasked' with 'Bolshevik vigilance', the informer receives a good mark, and comes nearer promotion. Every high police official has an interest in persuading the government and the party central committee that

subversive conspiracies are being constantly hatched, and that only his exceptional perspicacity and resourcefulness have saved the leaders of state and party from a horrible fate. Investigating officials must produce a regular flow of sensational confessions: in fact the extraction of confessions from arrested enemies of the people, like the extraction of coal from the mines, is organised on the principles of Stahanovism and socialist competition. Above all, every policeman from the highest to the lowest rank has an interest in the maintenance of international tension. As long as it is believed that the imperialist Powers are straining every muscle to infiltrate spies, agitators and saboteurs into the 'countries of Soviet or popular democracy', so long will the maintenance of a huge host of secret informers, uniformed and plain-clothes policemen, concentration-camp guards, and special *élite* formations of political troops be justified. The interests of the police as a political class require that the people of the Soviet Union and the popular democracies should live for ever in the shadow of war.

The broad lines of policy, and the framework of the political and economic machines, are clear enough: the one important factor which the 'iron curtain' does effectively conceal from Western observation is public opinion. Western visitors, even those who are genuinely open-minded and know East European languages, cannot easily penetrate into people's minds. East European peasants have always distrusted visitors from their own cities, let alone from abroad: they are not more likely to-day than under the pre-war dictatorships to speak their true thoughts. Access to individual factory workers is probably even more difficult for foreigners than access to peasants. Westerners who can visit close personal friends from before the war have a better chance than others, and knowledge of the local language is of course always a help. Casual talks in trains and shops are often revealing. But all impressions of this sort, though valuable, should not be overrated. The best way of estimating public opinion—and certainly it is inadequate—is to study the action of the governments and the past history of the peoples.

Communists and their sympathisers will of course indignantly deny all this. For them the issue is clear. A visit to a popular democracy should at once make clear to any Western traveller of good faith that the peoples are solidly behind the governments, that only a handful of traitors and imperialist spies are hostile. This is proved, they argue, by any visit to a factory, where the

working *élan*, the drive for production, the knowledge that 'industry now belongs to the people', leap to the eye. If the Western visitor has any remnants of doubt, let him attend a political meeting. If he is not blind, the spontaneous enthusiasm of the working masses, the long processions from office and factory, each group holding proudly erect its banners and its giant portraits of Stalin and of the local 'beloved leader', the fiery oratory of the speakers and the stormy ovations of the happy crowds, should surely convince him, unless his judgment is irrevocably warped by the lies of the journalist lackeys of capitalism, that here in the popular democracies are freedom and joy such as the unhappy nations of the West have never known.

Those not exalted by the faith of communism must deal with factors both more sordid and more measurable than working *élan* and spontaneous enthusiasm. Organised political opposition by non-communist parties has been broken. The political ideas which the parties once preached survive in men's minds. It would take very much longer to obliterate them than despots imagine: the revival of parties in Italy after twenty years of fascism proved this. As we have seen, each social class, workers and peasants as well as intellectuals, has concrete grounds for discontent. In each class there are convinced Communist Party members, and others who, without belonging to the party, accept its ideals. All these—and it would be a mistake to underrate their energy, their devotion, or even their numbers—are willing to work at the terrific pace required for the benefit not of themselves but of generations to come. But the majority in each class—and this also includes many Communist Party members—do no more than obey orders, as their forbears obeyed orders of kings and emperors, tsars and sultans.

The removal of the political parties, with their detailed programmes and their organisations, providing alternative policies and alternative leaderships, has left Eastern Europe with only two simple creeds as alternative ideologies to communism—Christianity and nationalism. Of the Christian churches something has already been said. A few more words are needed on nationalism.

The old disruptive petty nationalism of neighbour nation against neighbour nation was a curse in the old Eastern Europe: its disappearance could do only good. One of the constructive features of communist policy has been the attempt to eliminate it. If Rumanians can be cured of hating Hungarians, or Serbs

Croats, or Poles Czechs, this can only be welcomed. As we have seen, it is doubtful whether the communists have in fact succeeded in their aim. Communist tyranny, reaching every aspect of private and public life, may on the contrary exacerbate petty nationalism.

But whatever may be the truth about this to-day, and however the old rivalries and hatreds between East European nations may develop, there is another kind of nationalism which communist rule has certainly intensified. This may be called defensive nationalism. It is the feeling of nations whose national culture and individuality is threatened with extinction. The best historical parallel are the Turkish invasions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Then a foreign conqueror of immense power and of outlook and culture terrifyingly different from their own overwhelmed the nations of the Balkans and the Danube valley. For four hundred years they were submerged, and when the tide receded they found themselves in a Europe unrecognisably different from that to which they had once belonged. The contrasts and distortions caused by their loss of four centuries account for many of their troubles of the last generations.

The Soviet invasion has brought a conqueror no less different in outlook and culture than were the Turkish conquerors. Whereas the Turks left them their religion, and made little attempt to force them into the Islamic cultural framework, the Soviet leaders, using disciples from their midst, are resolved to destroy their religion and to knead them into the Soviet mould. When the communists declare that nationalism is reactionary, and must be replaced by internationalism, they mean something quite different from Western democrats who use the same words. Internationalism in the communist vocabulary means nationalism on behalf of the Soviet Union. Emperor Francis of Austria once required that his subjects should be 'patriots for me': to-day in a far more thorough sense East Europeans are required to be patriots for Stalin. When communists declare that all nationalities within their countries will enjoy equal cultural rights, they do not mean what these words mean in the West. They mean that the spoken and written word will be used in all languages of their country to spread communist ideas and Soviet culture. National history must be rewritten, and national literature re-edited and re-censored, to fit the Procrustean framework of the Agitprop department in Moscow. If the policy can be maintained for a few generations, Eastern Europe will have no more Poles, Czechs or

Hungarians, but Polish-, Czech- or Hungarian-speaking *homines sovietici*.

This the East Europeans know. The intellectuals would express their fears more clearly, the peasants and workers are less articulate but feel no less strongly. The reaction of all alike is nationalism. Should the present regimes be overthrown, they would be followed by a frenzy of nationalism, which might be directed against neighbour nations, but would certainly be directed against all communists and all Russians. It would be combined in most cases with religious fanaticism. It would seek revenge. It would have obvious points of similarity with the fascist and clerical-fascist movements of the past, such as the Rumanian Iron Guard or the Austrian Heimwehr.

Violence and fraud beget fraud and violence. A fascist revival as a sequel to communist dictatorship is a grim prospect. The West must use every opportunity to influence events in a different sense. But it is as wrong to refuse to resist communism because fascism might result as to refuse to prepare one's own defences because war is a horrible thing. And Westerners should be careful in their denunciation of East European nationalism. The dreary rivalries and territorial squabbles of small nations should indeed be condemned as a nuisance to peace and a tragic waste of national energies. But defence of national individuality against an alien totalitarian Moloch is neither ignoble nor ridiculous. Western nations have never faced such a threat. No one questions their nationality, they do not have to defend it. The East European nations have their backs to the wall. If the West cannot help them, it need not insult them.

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Eastern Europe in the twentieth century has been a storm centre. In it two world wars have started. The declining Habsburg and Ottoman empires could not satisfy their subjects. From their overthrow the subjects hoped for greater freedom and better material conditions. But in the Danubian succession states, Czechoslovakia alone excepted, there was less liberty and greater poverty than under the Habsburgs. It may be doubted even whether the people of Macedonia, Thrace and Albania fared better as citizens of independent Balkan states than as subjects of the Padishah. Social and national conflicts made the inter-war regime intolerable, and when it too collapsed before a double foreign invasion, German and Russian, millions hoped that their

lot would improve. Yet to-day many of those millions feel that the rule of King Log has been replaced by that of King Stork. They would say that there is now far less liberty than between the wars, and that material improvement, though promised for the future, is barely visible in the present.

Romantic longing for the past is of course a waste of time. The Habsburg empire was not dismembered by wicked Western statesmen: it collapsed from its own weakness, and would have collapsed earlier if it had not been bolstered up by its powerful ally Germany. The inter-war regimes collapsed because they were singly too weak, and too divided against each other, to withstand assault from without. Both the Habsburg empire and the inter-war regimes possessed good as well as bad features, some of which may be revived in whatever regime takes form in the future. But restored in their old form they will not be, and it is useless to lament their passing.

But why has Eastern Europe not attained stable government since the decline of the old empires, and why has Eastern Europe's instability caused so much trouble to the whole continent and indeed to the whole world? If the answer must be summarised in a single phrase, it is the distortion—economic, cultural and political—arising from the impact of the West on the East, the conflict between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries which exist side by side in Eastern Europe. This phenomenon is by no means confined to Eastern Europe. It is found in different forms in Asia, the Middle East and South America, and is beginning to appear in Africa.

The most important economic distortion is over-population. The growth of population seems to have been to a great extent the result of Western influence—of more orderly government, better transport and medical services, and demand for the produce of the Eastern soil and subsoil. But the growth of population has outstripped the rise of agricultural output or the creation of new jobs in industry. Rural over-population was the greatest cause of poverty in imperial Russia and in inter-war Eastern Europe, and is to-day the scourge of most of Asia and part of Africa.

The cultural and political distortions produced quicker visible results. As Eastern Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century was drawn into the world capitalist economy, individual East Europeans of the ruling and trading classes became familiar with the Western way of life, sent their sons to study in the West, and set up in their own countries schools and colleges of the

Western type. So grew the East European intelligentsia. So arose a class of people who had more in common with French lawyers or German doctors than with their own country's peasants or workers. Some cheerfully accepted the fact, and tried to become Westerners, to act as the representatives of the West in their own countries. Their life was more agreeable than that of the workers and peasants, but they were not necessarily cynical exploiters. They often sincerely believed that they were serving their peoples by giving them an example. Others, however, revolted against their position. They were appalled by the contrast between the democratic ideas which they had learned in the universities of Paris and Vienna—or Belgrade and Warsaw—and the reality around them. They saw that Westerners living in their country often did not scruple to perpetuate and profit from their backwardness and misgovernment. They were thus fascinated by the West but also disgusted. They were determined to acquire the knowledge, skill and equipment of the West, but to use it to shake off the yoke of the West.

Nationalism and social revolution were inextricably linked. National liberation from Western domination—whether direct as British rule in Egypt, or indirect as French capital in Imperial Russia—was expected also to bring social liberation to the peasant and worker. This is no specially East European phenomenon. The contrast between the luxury of bourgeois Bucarest and the squalor of the Wallachian village ten miles away does not essentially differ from the contrast between the luxury of bourgeois Shanghai and the squalor of the Chinese village at its gates. The Iron Guard in Rumania, the early Wafd in Egypt, the early Kuomintang in China, the first communist movements in the Balkans all have in common the frustration of the intellectual who has savoured the delights of the twentieth century and knows that his people is living in the sixteenth. All were movements for both national and social revolution.

In a sense Russian Bolshevism is only a special case of this general phenomenon. Marxism was already a body of well-defined doctrine, based on the experience of industrial Europe, before Lenin created the Bolshevik Party. But Lenin was the heir not only of Marx but of the Russian revolutionary intellectuals. He was fighting not only a class war against Russia's rulers but a war for the national liberation and the modernisation of Russia. The revolutionary leader of a country whose industrial wealth largely belonged to French, British, German and Belgian capital-

ists felt a special sympathy for the national revolutionary movements of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Under the rule of the Georgian Stalin this element in Soviet policy, and so in world communist doctrine, became still more prominent.

The role of the frustrated intelligentsia in Imperial Russia, and the debt of Lenin to the early Russian revolutionaries, are of course well known in the West. They are among the favourite platitudes of Anglo-Saxon journalists and broadcasters. What is not so well known is that there is nothing particularly Russian about this phenomenon. A recent brilliant study has drawn a parallel between the Russian and Indian intelligentsia.<sup>1</sup> No doubt similar parallels could be found in Peru, Indo-China or Nigeria.<sup>2</sup> The frustrated revolutionary intellectual is an inevitable product of an environment in which the sixteenth and twentieth centuries exist side by side, that is of an environment which is becoming typical for the greater part of the human race. The West European and North American type of society, with its numerous middle class, skilled and educated farmers and workers, and close connections between village and town, is the exception not the rule. It is the society of some 350 millions out of 2,000 million people. As rural over-population in the backward countries grows more acute, as the masses grow more aware and more desirous of the good things of the twentieth century, and as the rulers grow more afraid of the pressure of the masses, so inevitably a section of the westernised or semi-westernised intelligentsia becomes the spear-head of a revolutionary movement.

Communism has extended from its first 'territorial base' in Russia to Eastern Europe and to China. Its two next objectives are Western Europe and colonial or formerly colonial Asia. Communism already commands the allegiance of the majority of French and Italian workers, but that is not enough to give the communists control of the French and Italian states. Communists have so far captured only one advanced industrial state with a culturally advanced people—Czechoslovakia—and this they achieved by infiltration of police, army and bureaucracy prepared long beforehand. Such infiltration is not possible in France or Italy. Only the destruction of the state machines in war can give the communists victory. And war is not a good risk for the Soviet Union until she has won control of Germany. And this it may be

<sup>1</sup> Guy Wint, *The British in Asia*, chaps. 5 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> Interesting and significant accounts of the role of the intelligentsia in nationalist movements in West Africa may be found in W. R. Crocker, *Self-government in the Colonies*.

hoped the Western Powers are wise enough to prevent. On the other hand in Asia, where state machines are fragile and economic misery is growing, prospects are more favourable for communism. The struggle between the West and the Soviet Union for the support<sup>1</sup> of Asia and Africa will decide the future of the world.

If the West can use its great resources to benefit the peoples of Asia and Africa, if it can capture their confidence and disprove the communist accusations of 'imperialist exploitation', then it can win this struggle. Then the Soviet communists will also lose their hold on Eastern Europe, which, if it suffers from the social and cultural maladies of Asia, is bound to the West by the Christian religion and, at least to some extent, by the liberal tradition. But to win the struggle will not be easy. Promises of Utopia only create disappointment and hatred. Positive action at once in the political, economic and cultural fields is needed. Yet if the West loses the struggle, the victory of communism on a world scale becomes a possibility, its only likely alternative being the destruction of most of human civilisation in international anarchy greater than any yet known.

Thus the future of Eastern Europe, and of all Europe, and of America too, depends on the defensive and offensive power of the West. Its defensive power can be ensured by the unity of Western Europe and North America and by untiring vigilance over the danger-points in Europe—Germany, Greece, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Scandinavia. Its offensive strength must be used in the struggle, not of arms but of economic strength and political ideas, that must be waged between the West and the Soviet Union for the friendship of the Asiatic and African peoples. The defensive and offensive policy are not alternatives: both are equally essential. If the West can make a success of both, it will have proved that Western civilisation deserves to survive.

<sup>1</sup> Ten years ago one might have written, instead of 'support', 'leadership'. To-day that word is out of date. The West has of course much to teach Asia and Africa. Asians and Africans know this, but insist on being treated as equals. The superiority of Soviet to Western propaganda is largely due to its emphasis on equality, which contrasts with condescending attitude of many Westerners, even the most genuinely progressive. The aim of Soviet policy is of course to exploit the peoples of Asia and Africa, as it exploits the people of Russia. But the West, which is far more capable of true friendship to Asia and Africa than are the Soviet leaders, must learn to modernise its language. Words are sometimes as important as deeds.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

### (a) BACKGROUND

#### (1) *General History*

This is no place for a systematic historical bibliography for Eastern Europe. The following books would, however, be useful to any readers who wish to pursue the subject.

Sumner, *Survey of Russian History*.

Stählin, *Geschichte Russlands*.

Hoetzsch, *Russland*.

Maynard, *Russia in Flux*.

Rose, *The Rise of Polish Democracy*.

Feldman, *Geschichte der politischen Ideen in Polen*.

Zweig, *Poland between Two Wars*.

Buell, *Poland, Key to Europe*.

Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy*.

Macartney, *Hungary and her Successors*.

R. W. Seton-Watson, *History of the Czechs and Slovaks*.

*History of the Rumanians*.

Swire, *Bulgarian Conspiracy*.

Sir Charles Eliot, *Turkey in Europe*.

Foster, *A Short History of Modern Greece*.

Kolarz, *Myth and Reality in Eastern Europe*.

H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars*.

#### (2) *Russian Bolshevism*

The following are recommended, not because they exhaust the subject, but because they help to explain the policy of communists in both the Soviet Union and sovietised Eastern Europe.

V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*.

*What is to be Done?*

*Two Tactics of Social Democracy*.

*The State and Revolution*.

Y. Martov and F. Dan, *Geschichte der russischen Sozialdemokratie*.

F. Dan, *Proiz'hozhdenie Bolshevizma*.

J. V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*.

I. Deutscher, *Stalin, a Political Biography*.

J. Towster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R.*

S. N. Prokopovich, *Russlands Volkswirtschaft unter den Sowjets*.

R. Carew Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism*.

(3) *Political, social and economic problems before 1939*

The following is a list of some East European and other books, of varying quality, which I have found useful.

D. Warriner, *The Economics of Peasant Farming*.

Molloff (ed.), *Die sozialökonomische Struktur der bulgarischen Landwirtschaft*.

Studies of various aspects of Bulgarian agriculture in 1936 by a number of Bulgarian experts.

*Hungarian works*

I. Kovács, *A néma forradalom (The Silent Revolution)*.

*Kivándorlás (Emigration)*.

G. Illyes, *A puszták népe (The People of the Puszta)*.

J. Révai, *Marxizmus és népiesség (Marxism and Populism)*.

G. Rézler, *A magyar nagyipari munkásság kialakulása (The Development of a Working Class in Large-scale Industry in Hungary)*.

The first three deal with problems of the Hungarian peasantry. Both authors were prominent members of the group of intellectuals which later formed the National Peasant Party (see pp. 199-200 above for the fate of this party). Révai's book is a friendly criticism of the work of the group from a strictly Marxist point of view. The last work is an account of the rise of industry, trade unions and the labour movement in Hungary up to 1914.

*Rumanian works*

Madgearu, *Evoluția economiei românești*.

Golopenția, *Starea culturală și economică a populației rurale*.

Zeletin, *Burghezia română*.

Pătrășcanu, *Problemele de bază ale României*.

*Sub trei dictaturi*.

Petrescu, *Istoria socialismului în România*.

Madgearu's book is the best survey of the Rumanian economy on the eve of the Second World War. Golopenția's is a study of the education and economic situation of the Rumanian peasantry at the same time. Zeletin is a liberal of the twenties who applied a quasi-Marxist analysis to Rumanian society in order to defend the progressive role of the bourgeoisie and of the Liberal Party. The two works of Pătrășcanu, the eminent communist intellectual purged for 'nationalist' deviations

in 1948, were written in wartime internment, and contain extremely interesting ideas. Petrescu describes the socialist movement from the moderate, or 'right wing' standpoint. For the fate of Petrescu, see p. 209 above.

#### *Polish works*

Jabłonski, *P.P.S. za wolność i lud* (*The Polish Socialist Party for Freedom and the People*).

*Bezrobocie wśród chłopów* (*Peasant Unemployment*).

*Struktura społeczna wsi polskiej* (*The Social Structure of the Polish Village*).

The first is a brief history of the Polish socialist movement from the point of view of the old party, before it was captured by the communists. The other two books are expert studies published by the Institute of Social Science in Warsaw in 1937.

#### *Serbo-Croatian works*

Svetozar Marković, *Srbija na istoku* (*Serbia in the East*).

Dimitrije Tucović, *Srbija i Albanija* (*Serbia and Albania*).

Lapčević, *Istorija socializma u Srbiji* (*History of Socialism in Serbia*).

Kosta Todorov, *Politička istorija savremene Bugarske* (*Political history of Modern Bulgaria*).

Rudolf Bićanić, *Kako živi narod* (*How the People Live*).

The first is a classic work on Serbia's position in the Balkans by the theorist of 'populist' socialism in Serbia in the seventies. The second, on relations between Serbia and Albania, is by the foremost Serbian Marxist before 1914. Lapčević was an early moderate leader of the Serbian socialist movement. Todorov was a Bulgarian agrarian exile, who lived in Yugoslavia between the wars. His book, though superficial, covers ground on which there is no serious book available. Bićanić was one of the leaders of the left wing of the Croatian Peasant Party in the thirties. His book describes social and economic conditions in the poorest provinces of Croatia, Bosnia and Dalmatia shortly before the war.

### (b) THE SECOND WORLD WAR

#### (1) *The origins*

Borkenau, *Austria and After*.

Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*.

R. W. Seton-Watson, *Britain and the Dictators*.

Macartney and Cremona, *The Foreign and Colonial Policy of Italy*.

Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1929-41*.

Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans*.

*Undeclared War*.

Wheeler-Bennett, *Munich*.

Namier, *Diplomatic Prelude*.

## (2) *Wartime diplomacy*

U.S. State Department, *Nazi-Soviet Relations*.

Rossi, *Deux ans d'alliance germano-soviétique*.

Gafencu, *Préliminaires de la guerre à l'Est*.

Ciano, *Diary*.

*L'Europa verso la catastrofe*.

Hitler and Mussolini, *Lettere e documenti* (Rizzoli, 1946).

Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*.

Donosti, *Mussolini e l'Europa*.

Bova Scoppa, *Colloqui con due dittatori*.

An account of conversations with the Antonescus by the war-time Italian Minister in Bucarest.

Cordell Hull, *War Memoirs*.

Sherwood (ed.), *The White House Papers of Harry Hopkins*.

Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*.

Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians*.

Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vols. 1 and 2.

Deane, *Strange Alliance*.

The experiences of the head of the United States military mission in Moscow.

Anders, *Army in Exile*.

Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory*.

The author was Polish Ambassador in Washington.

Fotić, *The War we Lost*.

The author was Yugoslav Ambassador in Washington, a staunch Serbian nationalist and supporter of Mihailović

## (3) *Axis occupation and resistance*

*The Trial of the Major German War Criminals*

Bühler, *Das Generalgouvernement, seine Verwaltung und seine Wirtschaft*.

By the State Secretary of the German occupation administration in Poland under Frank. Articles by a number of Nazi bureaucrats.

Karski, *The Story of a Secret State*.

The experiences of a member of the Polish underground movement

Zaremba, *Powstanie sierpniowe*.

An account of the Warsaw rising of 1944 by a Polish socialist in exile, based on a mass of evidence in the possession of the exiled Polish government

Grant Duff, *Hitler's Czech Protectorate*.

Lawrence, *Irregular Adventure*.

Rootham, *Missfire*.

Davidson, *Partisan Picture*.

Clissold, *Whirlwind*.

The last four are accounts of Yugoslav resistance by British officers who served in Yugoslavia. Lawrence was with Chetniks in Serbia in 1941-2, Rootham with Chetniks in Serbia in 1943-4, Davidson with partisans in Bosnia and in the Danubian provinces in 1943-4, Clissold with partisans in Croatia in 1944. Despite an unfortunate lack of references, Clissold's book, based on much experience also of pre-war Yugoslavia, is the best account of political and military developments in Yugoslavia as a whole. The other three are all valuable as eye-witness accounts

Maclean, *Eastern Approaches*.

By the head of the British Mission to Tito.

Martin, *Ally Betrayed*.

A passionate defence of General Mihailović.

Dudić, *Dnevnik 1941*.

Dedijer, *Dnevnik*.

Tito, *Borba za oslobodjenje Jugoslavije*.

The first two are personal diaries of partisans, the third is a collection of speeches and articles by Tito which appeared in the press published by the partisans on liberated territory during the war.

Amery, *Sons of the Eagle*.

Experiences of a British officer with Albanian resistance. Not only an interesting story, but an excellent account of the social and cultural background of Albania.

Vasiliev, *Suprotivata sreshtu fashizma v Bulgaria*.

An official communist version of Bulgarian resistance.

Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord*.

A detailed political analysis of Greece during and after the Axis occupation, by the head of the British military mission in Greece.

## (c) SOVIETISATION

My best single source on this period has been the *Summary of Broadcasts from Eastern Europe*, published by the monitoring service of the B.B.C. From this source the policy of the East European governments can be adequately covered. Important speeches and decrees, major decisions of economic policy, and congresses of communist and communist-tolerated parties and organisations are fully reported. What of course does not appear from this source is public opinion.

In the British press, the most valuable sources have been *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*. The *New York Herald Tribune* I have also been able to follow regularly, and have found most useful. I have read East European papers somewhat irregularly. Among Communist Party publications which I have found useful are the following:

<i>Bolshevik</i> (Soviet Communist Party)	Fortnightly
<i>Társadalmi Szemle</i> (Hungarian Communist Party)	Monthly
<i>Nowe Drogi</i> (Polish Workers' Party)	do.
<i>Novo Vreme</i> (Bulgarian Communist Party)	do.
<i>Komunist</i> (Yugoslav Communist Party)	do.
<i>Narodna Država</i> (Yugoslav State Control Commission)	do.
<i>For a lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy</i> (organ of the Cominform)	Fortnightly

The propaganda publications in English—*Hungarian Bulletin*, *Roumanian News* and *Polish Facts and Figures*—are also sometimes of use.

The following books by political exiles from Eastern Europe, who attempted to work under the new regimes but were removed from power and fled for their lives, are of considerable interest. In general, a distinction should be drawn between their accounts of the personal experiences of themselves and their friends, which must be regarded as reliable, and some of their generalisations, which are less certain.

Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination* (Poland).

Ripka, *Le coup de Prague* (Czechoslovakia).

Josten, *Oh, My Country* (Czechoslovakia).

Nagy, *The Struggle behind the Iron Curtain* (Hungary).

Sulyok, *Zwei Nächte ohne Tag* (Hungary).

Kovács, *Im Schatten der Sowjets* (Hungary).

An interesting account of the Red Army in Hungary is

Orme, *From Christmas to Easter*,

The following are accounts by Western observers:

Barker, *Truce in the Balkans*.

Mainly Rumania and Bulgaria in 1946. Extremely fair and well informed.

Diamond, *Czechoslovakia between West and East*.

By a former U.N.R.R.A. official.

McNeill, *The Greek Dilemma*.

An impartial American account.

Markham, *Rumania under the Soviet Yoke*.

Passionate but well-documented attack by a veteran American correspondent.

Bartlett, *East of the Iron Curtain*.

A balanced and most readable survey of the situation in 1949.

Gunther, *Behind Europe's Curtain*.

Voigt, *Pax Britannica*.

*The Greek Sedition*.

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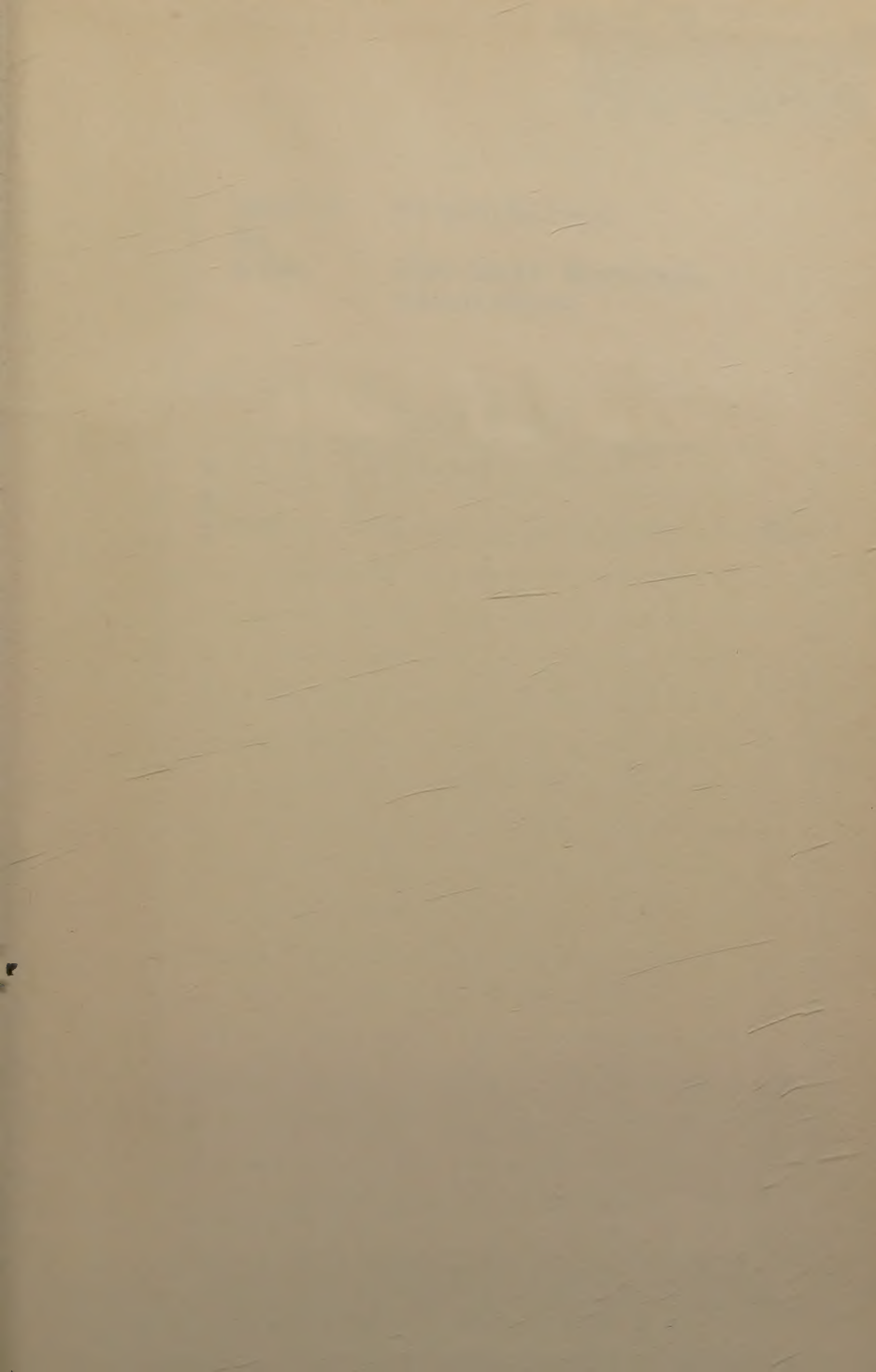
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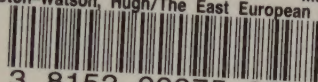
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